An All New Six-Part Action Adventure Sci-Fi Series
aspen comics
Vol. 1
Portal Bound
Roslan | Carrasco
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#0
OF 5
Cover A
Their future depends on each other.
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of 5
Cover B
adam archer
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# "Two Earths"


MARK ROSLAN & GABE CARRASCO
story

ALEX ARIZMENDI
pencils & digital inks

WES HARTMAN
colors

ZEN
lettering


HAVOS

A WORLD OF WARRIORS, BORN FROM BLOOD. THE PEOPLE ARE TOUGH, BRAVE AND STRONG. THEY WORK HARD AND CRAVE THE DAYS OF GLORY FROM BATTLE. EXCEPT FOR THE INEVITABLE CHALLENGE OF CONTEST, **HAVOS** HAS NESTLED INTO PEACE.

RULED BY **EMPEROR ATILUS**, A JUST KING FROM A STRONG LINEAGE. HIS GOVERN HAS BEEN GLORIOUS FOR MANY YEARS-- UNIFYING AND GIVING STABILITY TO THE VARIOUS REGIONS...

HOWEVER, HE IS A DIFFERENT MAN NOW. EVERYTHING IS DIFFERENT NOW...

IF HE FINDS OUT YOU HELPED US, HE'LL **KILL** YOU, **VANORA**...

Direct Edition
by -ALEX ARIZMENDI & WES HARTMAN

Direct Edition
by -ADAM ARCHER

Aspen Comics presents

# PORTAL BOUND

Issue Zero


Editors: Vince Hernandez & Frank Mastromauro · Design: Mark Roslan · Production: Mark Roslan & Gabe Carrasco · Logo: Peter Steigerwald

PORTAL BOUND created by MARK ROSLAN & GABE CARRASCO

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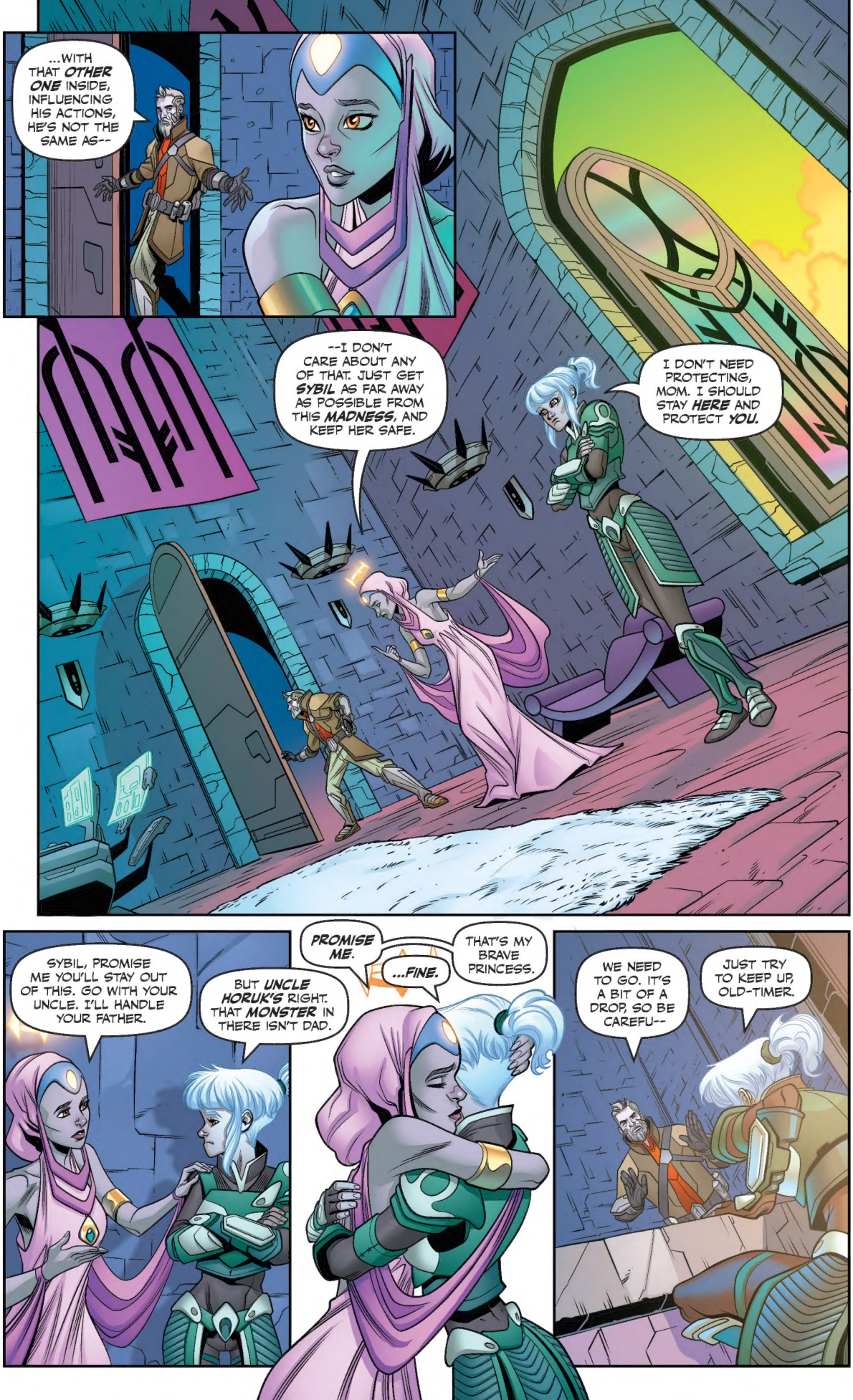
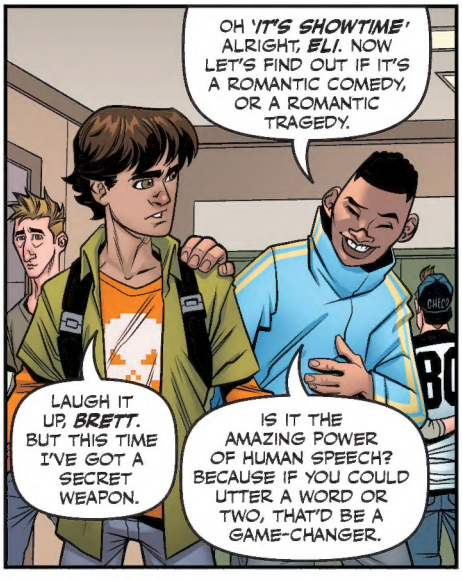

...WITH THAT OTHER ONE INSIDE, INFLUENCING HIS ACTIONS, HE'S NOT THE SAME AS--
--I DON'T CARE ABOUT ANY OF THAT. JUST GET SYBIL AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE FROM THIS MADNESS, AND KEEP HER SAFE.
I DON'T NEED PROTECTING, MOM. I SHOULD STAY HERE AND PROTECT YOU.
SYBIL, PROMISE ME YOU'LL STAY OUT OF THIS. GO WITH YOUR UNCLE. I'LL HANDLE YOUR FATHER.
BUT UNCLE HORUK'S RIGHT. THAT MONSTER IN THERE ISN'T DAD.
PROMISE ME.
...FINE.
THAT'S MY BRAVE PRINCESS.
WE NEED TO GO. IT'S A BIT OF A DROP, SO BE CAREFU--
JUST TRY TO KEEP UP, OLD-TIMER.

KEEP HER SAFE, HORUK. IF SYBIL ENDS UP BEING DRAGGED INTO THIS...
...IT WILL BE YOUR END.
TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH. I WAS ABOUT TO START SLICING THROUGH THESE THINGS WITHOUT YOU.
THAT WOULD BE EXTREMELY UNWISE. THE FYMIERA ARE NOT EASILY DESTROYED. YOUR BLADES WOULD BARELY LEAVE A DENT UNLESS YOU KNEW EXACTLY WHERE TO STRIKE.
ARE YOU UNDERESTIMATING MY SKILL? YOU FORGET, I'M AN OFFICIAL KNIGHT, TRAINED ALONGSIDE THE BEST WARRIORS IN ALL OF HAVOS.
AH, BUT YOU FORGET I CREATED THE FYMIERA TO BE BETTER THAN KNIGHTS, AND I CRAFTED THE BLADES YOU WIELD. THE ONLY THING I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR IS YOUR ARROGANCE.
YOUR FATHER IS TO BLAME FOR THAT.
YEAH, WELL, ADD IT TO THE LIST.
THAT WAS EASIER THAN I THOUGHT. YOUR FYMIERA AREN'T AS SCARY AS I HAD HOPED FOR.
BECAUSE I ACTIVATED A VISUAL DAMPENER.
THEY CAN'T SEE US, BUT THEY CAN STILL HEAR AND SMELL US.
CHEATER.
THIS ISN'T A GAME, SYBIL. IF JUST ONE OF THEM KNOWS WE'RE HERE, HE'LL ALERT THE OTHERS AND WE'LL BE DONE FO--
VRREEVRREEVRREE
HORUK! I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE SAFE!

I'VE SET UP THE SATELLITE LAB AND HAVE READIED THE PORTAL FOR YOU AND SYBIL! I'LL SEND YOU COORDINATES NOW!
THANK YOU, RILEY, BUT WE'RE IN TROUBLE! THE FYMIERA HAVE LOCATED US!
OH, NO! I SEE THEM ON THE RADAR! THERE SEEMS TO ONLY BE FOUR CHASING YOU.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "ONLY"?
BBZZHHHT
WOOHOO! YOU GOT HIM! THREE REMAIN IN PURSUIT!
I CAN TAKE THREE.
SKRRRAAAHK
THUK!
NGGH-- NO, SYBIL! KEEP RUNNING!
BBZZVVTT
PHENOMENAL! ONLY ONE REMAINS!
EEEEEEEEE
SYBIL GET BACK! I CAN--
--NO! NO MORE TRICKS.
NO MORE RUNNING, TIME TO FACE THIS HEAD-ON.

EARTH
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
RRIIIINNNGG
OKAY... TIME TO FACE THIS HEAD-ON.
≥GULP≤ LOOKS LIKE IT'S SHOWTIME...


OH 'IT'S SHOWTIME' ALRIGHT, ELI. NOW LET'S FIND OUT IF IT'S A ROMANTIC COMEDY, OR A ROMANTIC TRAGEDY.
LAUGH IT UP, BRETT. BUT THIS TIME I'VE GOT A SECRET WEAPON.
IS IT THE AMAZING POWER OF HUMAN SPEECH? BECAUSE IF YOU COULD UTTER A WORD OR TWO, THAT'D BE A GAME-CHANGER.

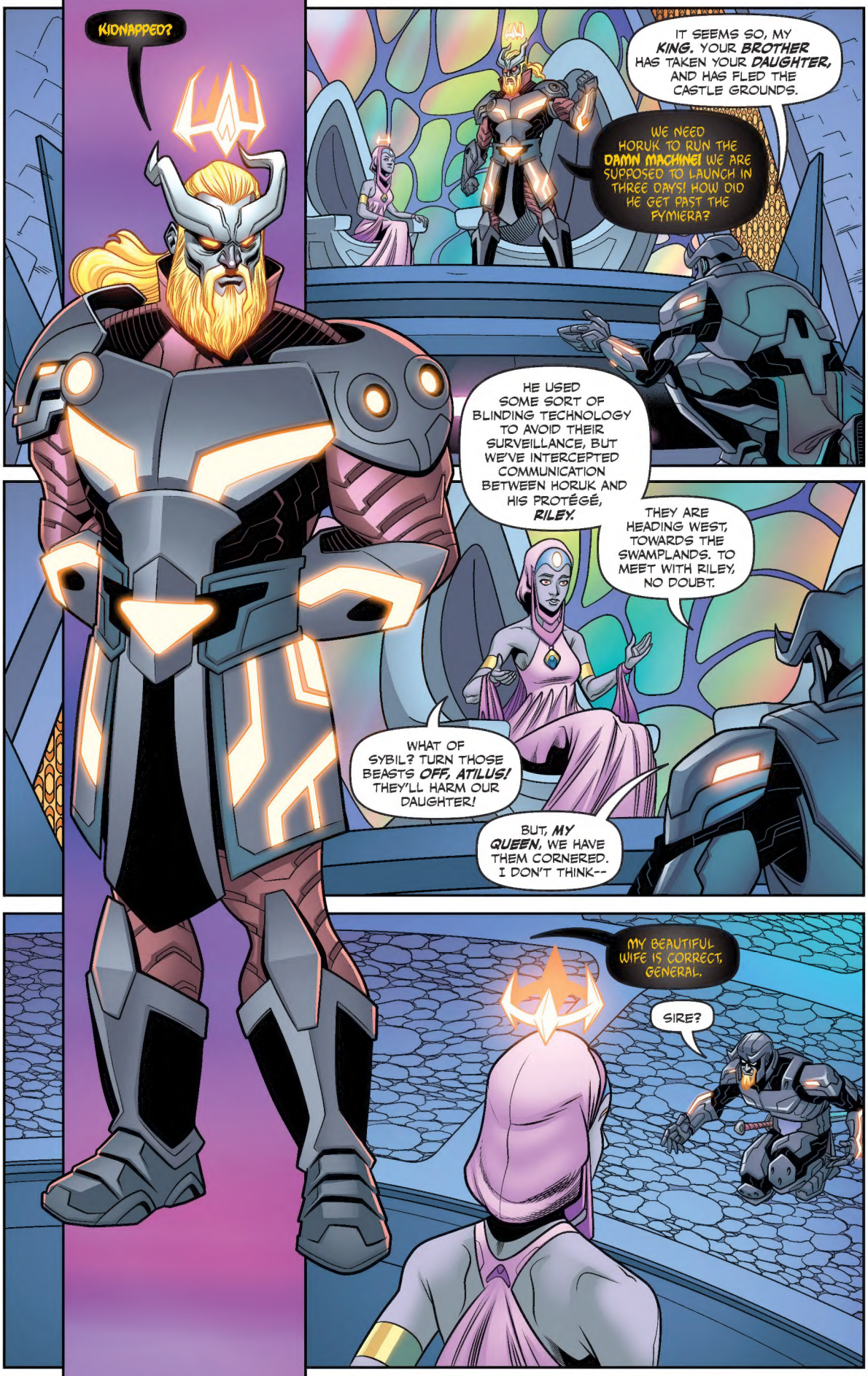
JUST WATCH AND BE AMAZED, MY FRIEND.
I'M ROOTIN' FOR YOU, BUDDY.

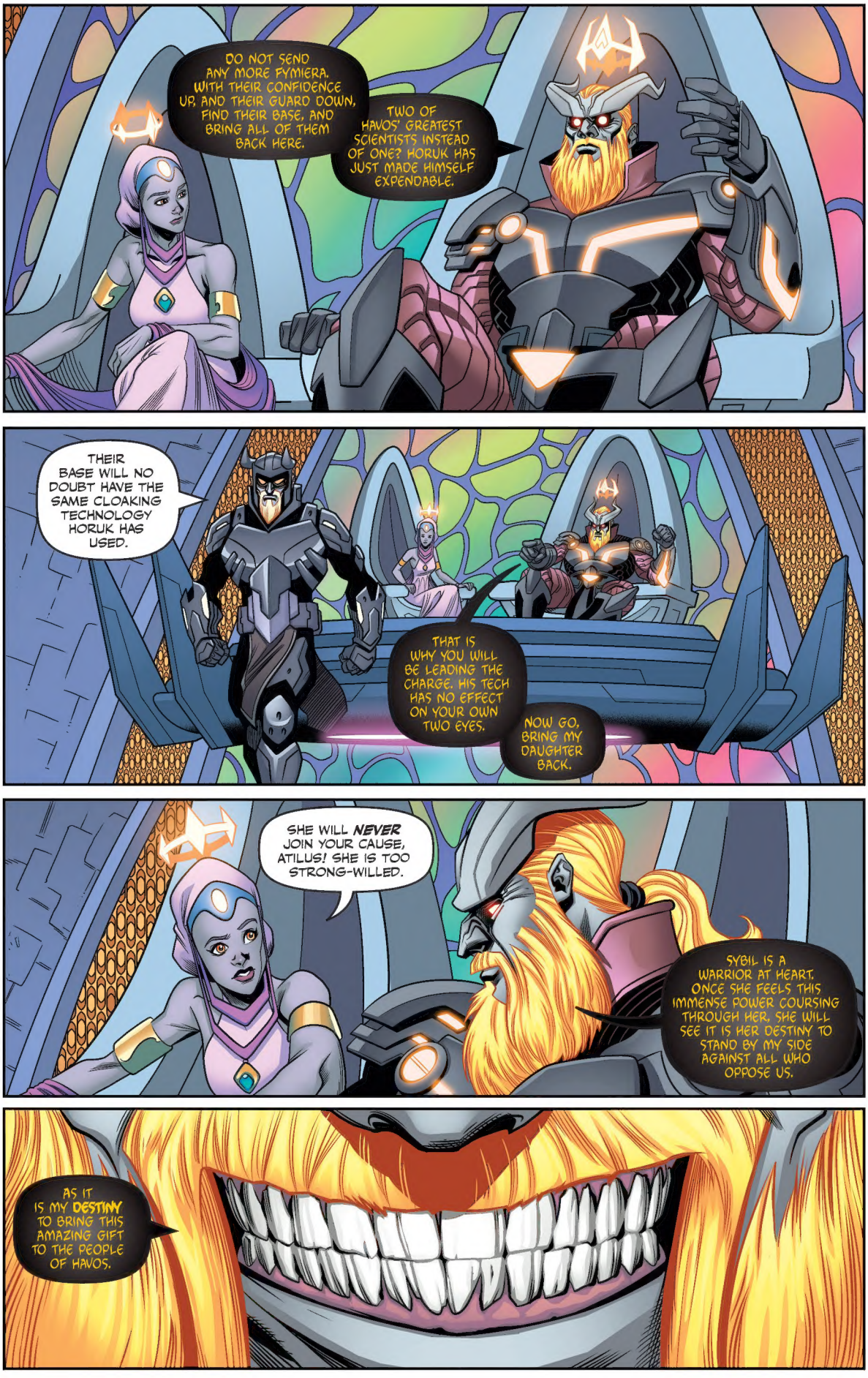
"HELLO! I AM ELIAS RIVERA FROM SCIENCE CLUB. I WAS WONDERING--" NO, TOO FORMAL.

"HEY! I'M ELIAS, AND I WAS GONNA MAYBE ASK IF YOU WERE POSSIBLY FREE TONIGHT--" NO, MORE CONFIDENT.

"WHADDUP? IT'S YOUR BOY ELI, AND--" NO. WHAT AM I, A RADIO D.J.?

YOUR BOY...
OH, HEY THERE.
UM, ARE YOU OKAY?
POPCORN? REALLY?
HEY, YOU SAID IT WAS SHOWTIME. I CAME PREPARED.
NOT FUNNY, MAN.
I AGREE... NOT FUNNY, OR ROMANTIC. I WANT MY MONEY BACK.
SO WHAT WAS THE SECRET WEAPON ANYWAY?
TOO MUCH SWEAT, OR BRUTALLY AWKWARD SILENCE?
CUZ' I GOTTA SAY, THOSE ARE PRACTICALLY 'ELI'S GREATEST HITS.'
≥SIGH≤
I WON TICKETS TO THIS CONCERT TONIGHT, AND I WAS GONNA ASK HER OUT--
--BUT YOU COULDN'T BRING YOURSELF TO DITCH YOUR BEST FRIEND, SO YOU'RE ASKING ME TO GO INSTEAD! THANKS, ELI!
I GUESS. NO USE IN WASTING THEM.
HEY IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GO, I CAN JUST TAKE YOUR MOM. SHOW HER A GOOD NIGHT, KNA'MEAN? HAHA!
WHATEVER. MY PLACE AT SEVEN?
FA'SHO! LATER, BRO.


KIDNAPPED?
IT SEEMS SO, MY KING. YOUR BROTHER HAS TAKEN YOUR DAUGHTER, AND HAS FLED THE CASTLE GROUNDS.
WE NEED HORUK TO RUN THE DAMN MACHINE! WE ARE SUPPOSED TO LAUNCH IN THREE DAYS! HOW DID HE GET PAST THE FYMIERA?
HE USED SOME SORT OF BLINDING TECHNOLOGY TO AVOID THEIR SURVEILLANCE, BUT WE'VE INTERCEPTED COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HORUK AND HIS PROTÉGÉ, RILEY.
THEY ARE HEADING WEST, TOWARDS THE SWAMPLANDS. TO MEET WITH RILEY, NO DOUBT.
WHAT OF SYBIL? TURN THOSE BEASTS OFF, ATILUS! THEY'LL HARM OUR DAUGHTER!
BUT, MY QUEEN, WE HAVE THEM CORNERED. I DON'T THINK--
MY BEAUTIFUL WIFE IS CORRECT, GENERAL.
SIRE?


DO NOT SEND ANY MORE FYMIERA. WITH THEIR CONFIDENCE UP, AND THEIR GUARD DOWN, FIND THEIR BASE, AND BRING ALL OF THEM BACK HERE.
TWO OF HAVOS' GREATEST SCIENTISTS INSTEAD OF ONE? HORUK HAS JUST MADE HIMSELF EXPENDABLE.
THEIR BASE WILL NO DOUBT HAVE THE SAME CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY HORUK HAS USED.
THAT IS WHY YOU WILL BE LEADING THE CHARGE. HIS TECH HAS NO EFFECT ON YOUR OWN TWO EYES.
NOW GO, BRING MY DAUGHTER BACK.
SHE WILL NEVER JOIN YOUR CAUSE, ATILUS! SHE IS TOO STRONG-WILLED.
SYBIL IS A WARRIOR AT HEART. ONCE SHE FEELS THIS IMMENSE POWER COURSING THROUGH HER, SHE WILL SEE IT IS HER DESTINY TO STAND BY MY SIDE AGAINST ALL WHO OPPOSE US.
AS IT IS MY DESTINY TO BRING THIS AMAZING GIFT TO THE PEOPLE OF HAVOS.

I'VE BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME TO TAKE DOWN ONE OF THESE THINGS.
WHRAAAARRR!
'GOTTA SAY, HORUK, THESE FYMIERA AREN'T AS SCARY AS EVERYONE'S BEEN CRYING ABOUT!
SYBIL! GIVE ME A MOMENT, I CAN--
DON'T SWEAT IT. I'M ABOUT TO END THIS.
DIE, YOU DUMB MACHINE!
GRRRRRRRRAAAAA!
KTCH
BUT...THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! IT DIDN'T EVEN--
ARRTT
FWHEW!

NGGHH! NO NO NOOO!
VRRRRW
ARRTT
HOW DID YOU--?
A FOCUSED, MAGNETIC PULSE.
IF YOU'RE DONE TRYING TO GET US KILLED, WE NEED TO GET MOVING, NOW!
VEZZZOOO
AN E.M.P.! CLASSIC! BUT YOUR DEFENSES WON'T HOLD THEM OFF FOR VERY LONG. I'VE SENT TWO TREKALOPE TO TAKE YOU THE REST OF THE WAY.
IF YOU HURRY, YOU SHOULD BE HERE IN ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES!
DUDE! LOOKS LIKE WE SHOULD BE THERE IN ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES!
DIDN'T KNOW MY MOM WOULD BE AT WORK SO LATE... AGAIN, OTHERWISE SHE WOULD HAVE DRIVEN US.

NO WORRIES, BRO. I'M JUST HAPPY YOU ELIAS-ED OUT ON THAT GIRL, AND WE'RE GOING TO A FREE CONCERT. WHO'S PLAYING TONIGHT, ANYWAY?
UH, IT'S AN E.D.M. SHOW, SO... GAWDBANGER? UM, BASSPLOSION? SOME DUDE NAMED SCHRÖ-DANGER'S CAT?
OKAY, STOP TALKING BEFORE I HEAD BACK HOME.
TELL ME AGAIN WHY WE'RE RISKING OUR LIVES JUST TO GO VISIT YOUR WEIRDO ASSISTANT IN A SWAMP?
WE'RE HEADED TO A HIDDEN LABORATORY IN THE SWAMPLANDS WHERE RILEY HAS SET UP THE PORTAL.
...AND RILEY'S NOT WEIRD, SHE'S JUST... EXCITABLE.
HEY MAN, CHEER UP! I WAS JUST KIDDING, I WON'T DITCH YOU.
YOUR DAD? DIDN'T HE DISAPPEAR, LIKE, FOREVER AGO?
SORRY. IT'S NOT THAT, IT'S JUST...HOME STUFF. MY MOM'S BEEN REALLY STRESSED ABOUT MY DAD LATELY.
WAIT-- THERE'S ACTUALLY A PORTAL?
I THOUGHT YOUR "EXCITABLE" ASSISTANT WAS JUST BEING CRAZY.
I KNOW IT SOUNDS BIZARRE, BUT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO STOP ATILUS.
YOUR MOTHER FEARS FOR YOUR SAFETY, AND YOUR FATHER WANTS YOU TO JOIN HIS CAUSE, BUT I BELIEVE YOU CAN HELP US SAVE EVERYONE.
YEAH, BUT SHE NEVER GOT MUCH BETTER. SHE'S BEEN WORKING LATER AND LATER, AND REFUSES TO UNLOCK THE DOOR TO HIS STUDY-- LIKE SHE'S STILL WAITING FOR HIM TO COME BACK.
WHOA. SORRY TO HEAR THAT, BRO. YOU KNOW IF YOU EVER NEED TO CHAT--
DON'T SWEAT IT, MAN.
THE CONCERT'S JUST DOWN THIS HILL.

SOUNDS LIKE NO ONE IS ASKING ME WHAT I WANT.
THIS IS BIG, SYBIL. I KNOW YOU'D LIKE TO GO BACK FOR VANORA, BUT SAVING EVERYONE INCLUDES YOUR MOTHER. YOU JUST HAVE TO TRUST ME.
HORUK! YOU GUYS MADE IT!
PRINCESS SYBIL! SO GREAT TO FORMALLY MEET YOU! I'M RILEY! THE PORTAL IS ALL BUILT AND READY TO GO!
THAT'S IT? IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEING HELD TOGETHER WITH TAPE AND LUCK...
...AND TAR!
IS THAT THING EVEN SAFE? SHOULDN'T WE DO A TEST RUN OR SOMETHING?
NO CAN DO! THIS BABY'S A ONE-TIME TICKET TO EARTH AND BACK! LOOK! HERE'S THE GENERAL VICINITY YOU'LL HOPEFULLY BE ARRIVING AT, WHERE YOU CAN PROBABLY FIND YOUR ALTERNATE!
ARRIVED
≥PANT≤ NEW PLAN: WE TAKE A RIDESHARE BACK. I'M NOT PEDALING BACK UP THIS HILL.
HAHA, ALL RIGHT, PRINCESS.
MY ALTERNATE? WAIT-- DID YOU SAY HOPEFULLY?
DON'T WORRY, PRINCESS! I'M EIGHTY-EIGHT PERCENT CONFIDENT THIS WILL WORK!
RIGHT...EVEN IF I BELIEVE ANY OF THIS, YOU'RE GONNA NEED TO CALM DOWN AND START FROM THE TOP. OH, AND RILEY...?
...DON'T CALL ME 'PRINCESS.'
LET'S JUST GO IN AND DESTROY OUR EARDRUMS. AND BRETT...?
TO BE CONTINUED...
Portal Bound #1
APRIL 4TH 2018!

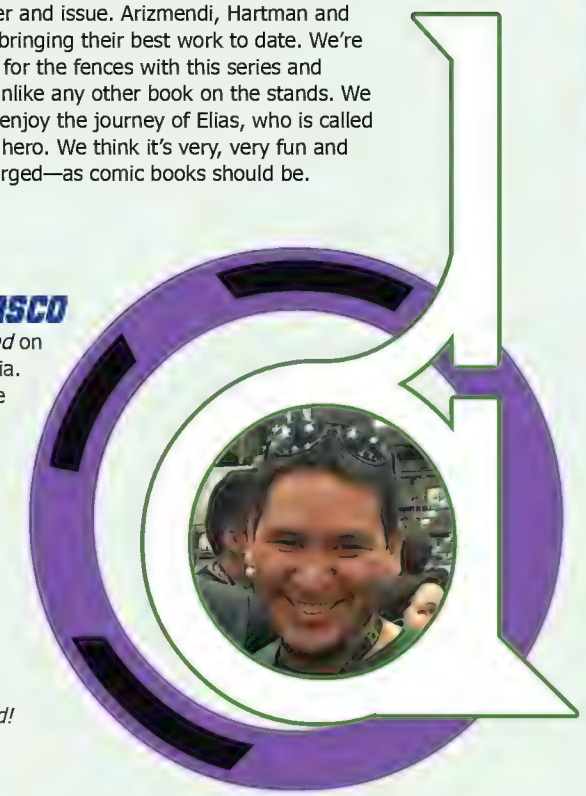
# BRINGING TWO UNIQUE WORLDS TO LIFE

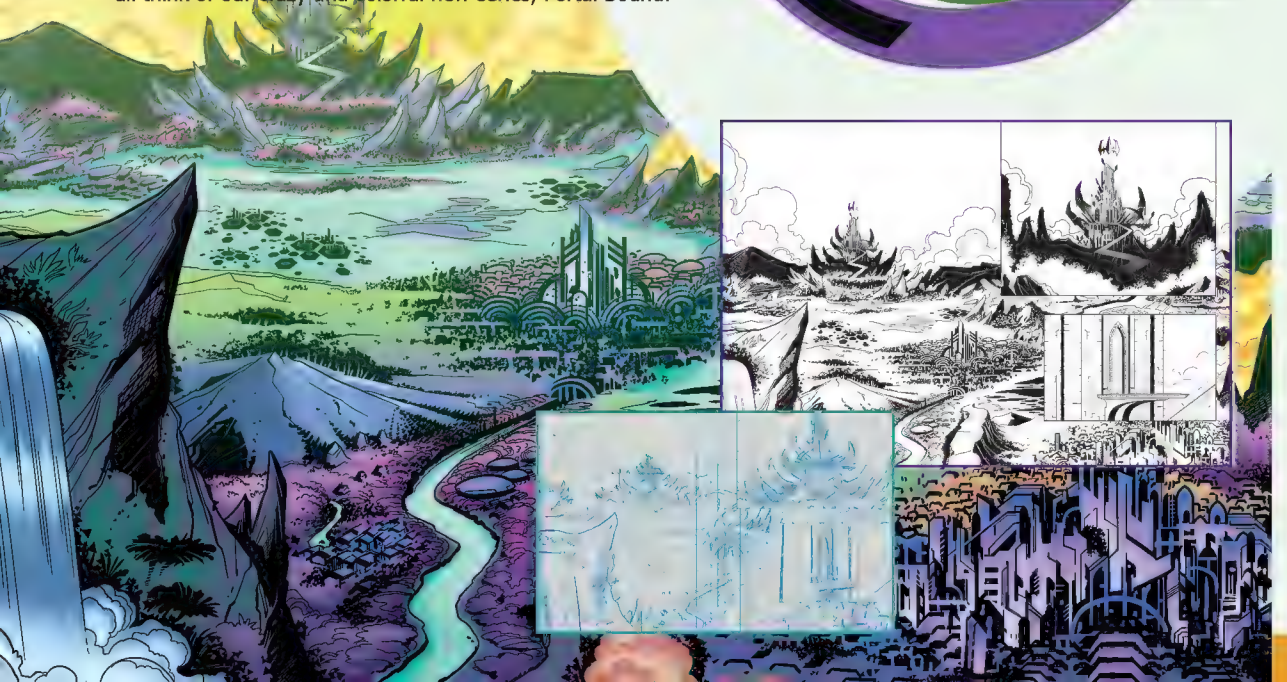
## MARK ROSLAN

What if you found out there was an Earth parallel to ours? Wouldn't you want to meet your other self? Those were the questions I asked my co-writer Gabe Carrasco. Together we took a spark of an idea and turned it into a brand new world in the Aspen Universe. *Portal Bound* is a darkly comedic sci-fi fantasy comic with two vastly different main characters that are essentially the same person. It seemed fitting to have two writers on the project. Our collaboration has been a blast, batting things back and forth like spontaneous curve balls—we get excited (almost too much) over each new character and issue. Arizmendi, Hartman and Zen are bringing their best work to date. We're swinging for the fences with this series and think it's unlike any other book on the stands. We hope you'll enjoy the journey of Elias, who is called upon to be a hero. We think it's very, very fun and emotionally charged—as comic books should be.

## GABE CARRASCO

Mark initially pitched me the idea of *Portal Bound* on a road trip to a signing near San Diego, California. The concept was complex, and took nearly the entirety of our two-hour drive to explain, but once he was done, I couldn't be more on board. I enthusiastically requested to co-write the series with him, and fortunately he agreed. We continued our discussion whenever we could, eventually scribbling down notes on each and every potential character design, narrative arc, motivation, and twist. Mark's been an amazing mentor in the comic writing process, and every second of building this has been great! Flash forward to today, as I see the hard work of Alex Arizmendi, Wes Hartman, Zen, Adam Archer, and of course Mark and myself come to fruition. I'm excited to see what you all think of our crazy and colorful new series, *Portal Bound!*





**SYBIL'S HAIR** We wanted to give Sybil a look that was immediately recognizeable, in addition to her colors. In the character description we had sent to series artist and designer Alex Arizmendi, we listed some examples from anime as well as some more barbaric styles that stuck out to us. Alex had sent us dozens of sketches before we nailed down the perfect look for Sybil. Some, although unique and aggressive, didn't quite balance with the youthful charm we were looking for in our series protagonist.

# SYBIL

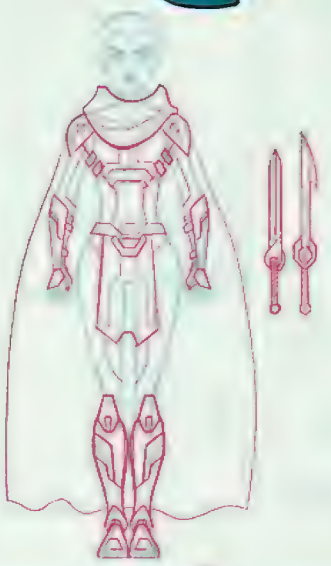
## THE SARCASTIC WARRIOR PRINCESS

### SYBIL'S DESIGN ESTABLISHED THE ENTIRE FEEL OF PORTAL BOUND.

The world of Havos is a mix of primitive viking warmongers and hi-tech science fiction. We initially played with the idea of giving Sybil, and all characters from Havos, very primal attributes like horns or fangs to visually set them apart from humans. Eventually, we scratched that idea and gave them all gray skin tones, with bright colored eyes and hair. For Sybil, we wanted a smart-mouthed warrior girl with a sharp blade and a sharper tongue. Having trained since she was able to wield a sword, and growing up separately from others her age, what Sybil lacks in social nuance she makes up for in wit, confidence, and the skill to back it up.

### PORTAL DESIGN

What would *Portal Bound* be without an awesome-looking portal? The first design we asked Alex to take a stab at was the portal featured on this issue zero cover. In the series, this portal was haphazardly built by our genius engineer, Riley, in the middle of the swamplands with only various pieces of Havos tech she came across. After discussing our options, we decided to go with a combination of A and C, shown here. (But keep an eye out for portal design B in a future issue!)



### SYBIL'S BATTLE ARMOR

Because Sybil is royalty, she wears her own unique armor made specifically for her rogue-like fighting style. Alex had sent over a great variety of armor designs with both viking and sci-fi influences. Ultimately, we landed on an asymmetrical space-knight outfit, which we sent over to series colorist Wes Hartman, who solidified Sybil's overall feel, and brought her character to life.

# ELIAS RIVERA

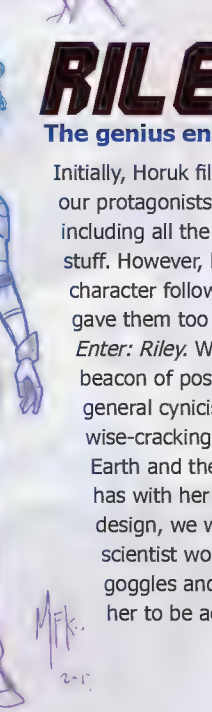
**Whole-hearted. Half of a hero.**

The reluctant hero is a pretty common trope in comic book lore. But Elias has the unfortunate situation of being only one half of a bigger role. An average high schooler, Eli discovers that not only is there another world out there, but he is key to helping save both! Co-writer Gabe Carrasco states: "For Elias' character design, we took a little of both Mark and myself. He's from Mark's home state of Virginia, shares my Mexican-American heritage, and like both of us, loves all things comics and video games."

# BRETT THOMAS

**Sidekick with the fly kicks.**

Everyone needs a best friend, and Brett is literally the best friend a dude can ask for. He's cool under pressure, supportive of his best bud, but isn't afraid to speak his mind when Eli needs to hear it. For Brett's design, co-writer Mark Roslan had this to say: "I modeled Brett after my two nephews, who are smart, nerdy and cool. He likes to be outside playing or riding his bike, but would rather join an eSports franchise. For his look I asked Alex to model him after a young professional basketball player, Steph Curry."



# RILEY

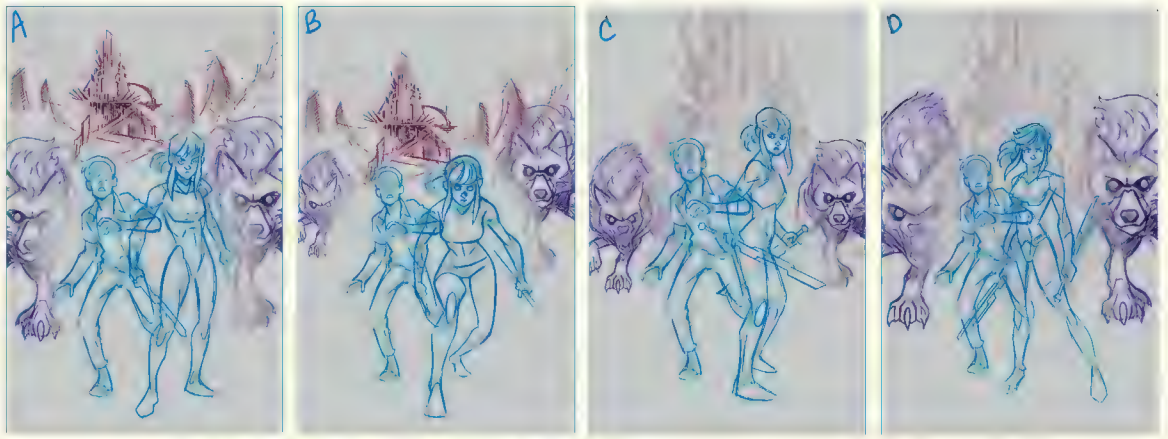
**The genius engineer.**

Initially, Horuk filled the role of giving our protagonists pertinent information, including all the wibbly-wobbly science stuff. However, having an older mentor character follow our heroes around gave them too much of a safety net. *Enter: Riley.* We created her to be a beacon of positivity to contrast Sybil's general cynicism, and Brett's snarky wise-cracking. She's fascinated by Earth and the unique connection it has with her home world. For her design, we wanted something a scientist would wear, like safety goggles and a coat, while allowing her to be active and move freely.

# HORUK

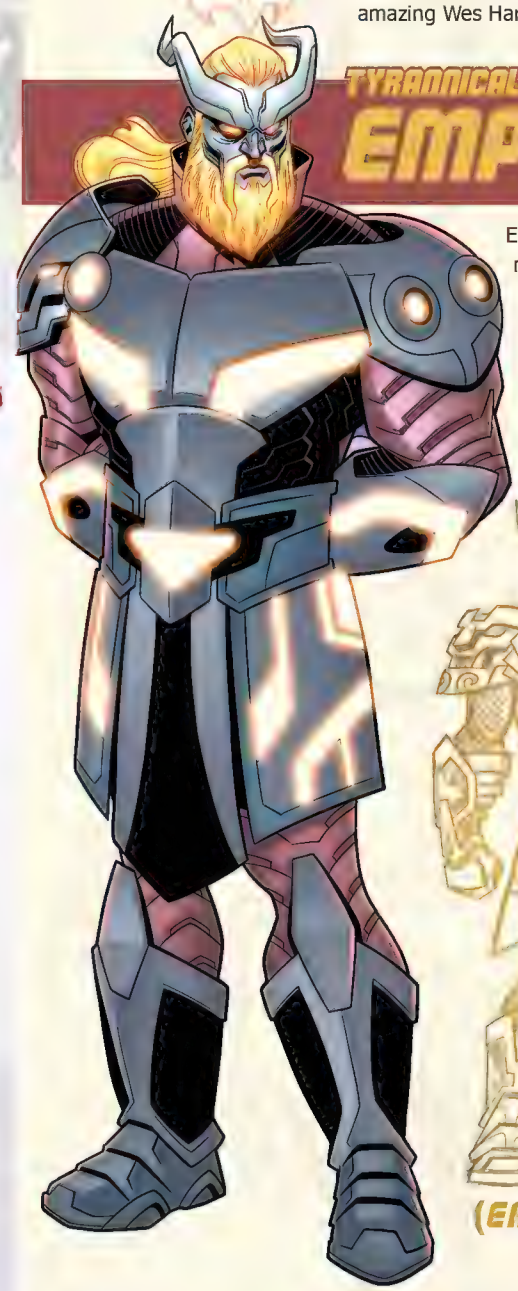
**Brother to a bully.**

Horuk's design was not an easy one. Shown here is an earlier, more ornate design from before we really fleshed out his character and overall role in the series. Horuk is the brother to our main antagonist, while being a mentor to Riley, and a moral compass to Sybil. We thought he looked too young and heroic here (and check out those horns!). Instead, we opted for an older, more science-based design, seen in the interiors of this issue.




## PORTAL BOUND #0 COVER LAYOUTS

The goal of the issue zero cover was to showcase all the significant elements of the series. We have our protagonists, Elias and Sybil, front and center coming through the portal. They're surrounded by the menacing Fymiera creatures in the colorful alien world of Havos, with Emperor Atilus' castle looming in the background. Series artist Alex Arizmendi nailed it with his designs! Once the amazing Wes Hartman added the colors, this cover really set the stage for our entire series.



## TYRANNICAL RULER OF HAVOS

# EMPEROR ATILUS

Emperor Atilus is a warrior first and a ruler second. He views Sybil as more of a weapon than a daughter, and yerns to bring Havos back to its glory days of war. He is the first fused character we're introduced to, and as that may not make a lot of sense in the pages of issue zero, but trust us when we say it is the most important element of the *Portal Bound* series. Like his brother Horuk, Atilus' initial designs were very detailed and complicated, taking inspiration from vikings and Norse mythology. Alex Arizmendi found a great medium clashing science fiction with fantasy in bringing this imposing character to life.

(EARLY DESIGN)

***Their Future Depends on Each Other in Aspen's newest series!***

**ISSUE #1 in stores April 4th, 2018!**

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# PORTAL BOUND

# "Let's HAVOS A Little Fun"

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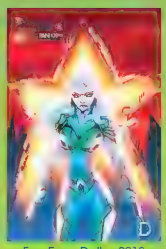
& Wes Hartman

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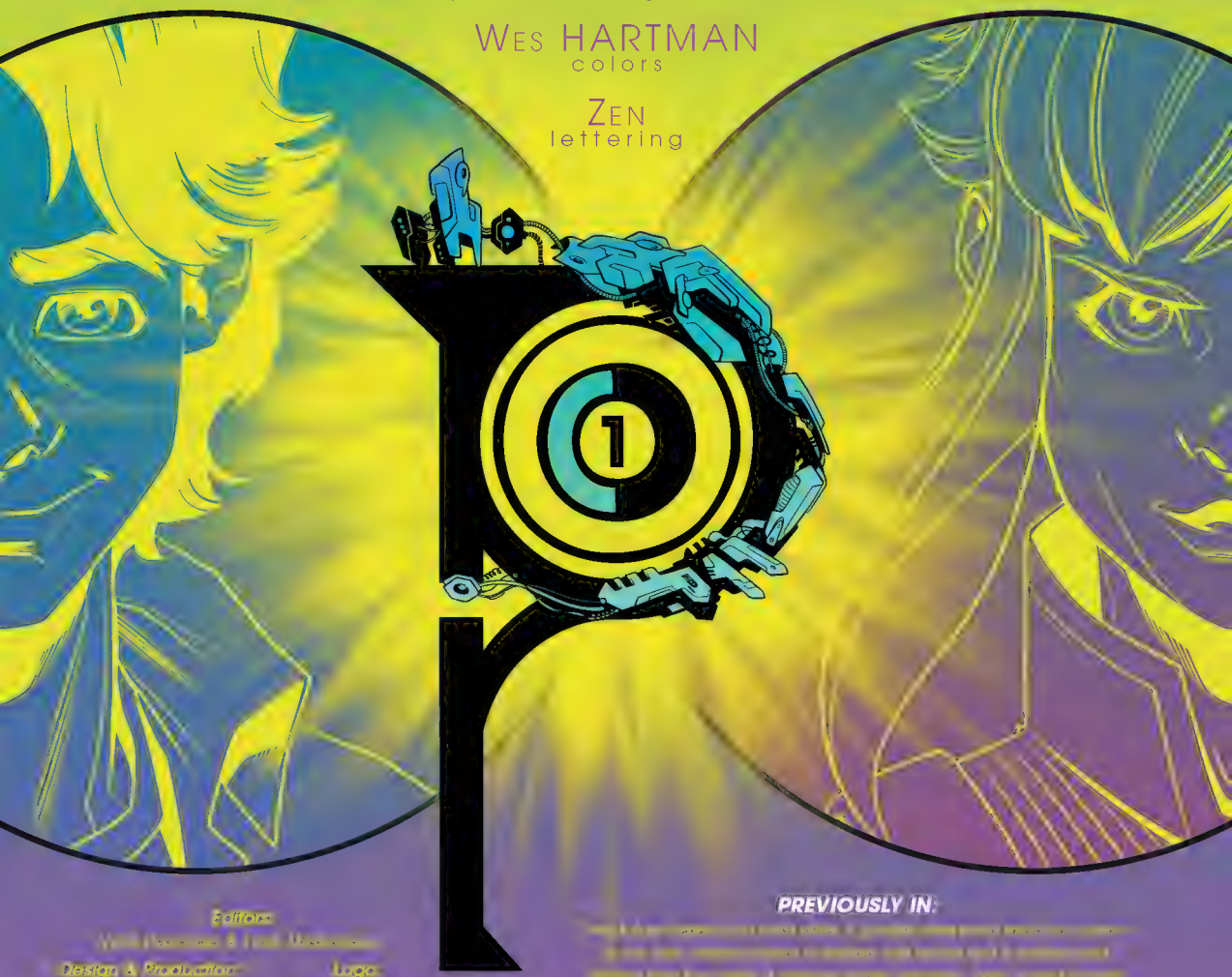


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"A PLANET EXISTS THAT LOOKS EXACTLY LIKE OURS, BUT EVERYTHING'S A LITTLE OFF.
"THE SKY'S THE WRONG COLOR, THE WATER LOOKS ALMOST POISONOUS, AND EVEN THE TREES PROVIDE THE WRONG SHADE OF, WELL...SHADE.
"ANIMALS COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES! SOME LOOK FAMILIAR, WHILE OTHERS ARE BEYOND YOUR WILDEST IMAGINATION!
"YOU'RE BORING ME.
"OKAY, OKAY, I'LL GET TO THE GOOD PART. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT THIS PLACE IS THE PEOPLE.
"THEY ARE THE STRANGEST VARIETY OF COLORS, AND WEAR THE MOST BIZARRE CLOTHES. BUT THEIR APPEARANCE ISN'T EVEN THE BEST PART...!
RILEY, GET TO THE POINT!"
"RIGHT-- SORRY."
EARTH ZUP
THIS PLACE IS NOT SOME ALIEN FEVER-DREAM, IT'S ACTUALLY-- HANG ON TO YOUR SOCKS, PRINCESS-- AN ALTERNATE, TWIN VERSION OF OUR PLANET!

HAVOS
RILEY'S SECRET SATELLITE LABORATORY.
ISN'T THAT THE MOST PHENOMENAL THING YOU'VE EVER HEARD?!
SO, HORUK AND I JUST ESCAPED FROM MY FATHER'S CASTLE AND FOUGHT SOME DEADLY BIO-MECH CREATURES, JUST TO GO THROUGH A MAGICAL PORTAL IN THE MIDDLE OF A SWAMP SO WE CAN VISIT AN ALTERNATE HAVOS WITH A WEIRD SKY?
TECHNICALLY THE PORTAL ISN'T MAGIC--
COME ON, UNCLE HORUK, I LISTENED TO YOUR WEIRDO LAB ASSISTANT AND I STILL THINK THIS "EARTH" WORLD IS A WASTE OF TIME.
SYBIL, PLEASE. ALTHOUGH RILEY'S PRESENTATION WAS A BIT MORE...DRAMATIC THAN NECESSARY, SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE'S TALKING ABOUT.
RILEY WAS AT MY SIDE WHEN WE FIRST DISCOVERED EARTH AND ITS UNIQUE CONNECTION TO HAVOS. WITH WHAT EMPEROR ATILUS HAS PLANNED, IT'S IN ALL OF OUR BEST INTERESTS TO SEE TO EARTH'S SAFETY.
WHO CARES ABOUT EARTH'S SAFETY? MY MOTHER IS STILL BACK AT THE CASTLE WITH THAT MANIAC!
THE QUEEN CAN HANDLE HERSELF. SHE'S TOUGHER THAN MOST PEOPLE THINK. JUST LIKE YOU.
GUYS? WE HAVE A FEW PROBLEMS!
IT LOOKS LIKE THOSE FYMIERA BEASTS ARE STILL TRACKING YOU.
PLUS, THE EMPEROR SENT A WAR GENERAL WHO CAN DEFINITELY SEE THROUGH OUR CLOAKING TECH. YOU TWO HAVE TO MOVE!

LET HIM FIND US! I COULD TAKE DOWN A DOZEN WAR GENERALS BACK IN BASIC TRAINING!
DON'T BE FOOLISH. A FIGHT WITH HIM WOULD COMPROMISE THE ENTIRE MISSION. WE NEED TO DO THIS QUIETLY.
WELL, THAT BRINGS US TO PROBLEM NUMBER THREE...
THIS BABY DOESN'T HAVE A RETURN PORTAL ON EARTH, SO THIS INITIAL JUMP WILL USE HEAPS OF ENERGY, WHICH WILL PROBABLY ALERT...WELL, EVERYONE. GENERAL FYMIERA-AND-FRIENDS INCLUDED.
RILEY, YOU'VE ALREADY BECOME A BETTER SCIENTIST THAN I COULD HAVE EVER IMAGINED.
AWW, WELL I LEARNED FROM THE BEST!
*AHEM*
IS THERE A "PROBLEM NUMBER FOUR," OR CAN WE GET THIS OVER WITH?
NOPE, THAT JUST ABOUT COVERS IT! I'LL KEEP THE PORTAL OPEN AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, BUT IF IT DEACTIVATES, YOUR WRIST-COMMS CAN--
HORUK CAN FILL ME IN ON THE DETAILS.
BUT PRINCESS SYBIL, I STILL THINK...
--I LEAVE THE NERD-STUFF TO THE NERDS, RILEY. JUST POINT ME IN THE DIRECTION I SHOULD SWING MY BLADE.

EARTH
VIRGINIA, USA!
...PLUS, IF YOU GRAB THE RUBY GAUNTLET FROM THE SECOND DUNGEON YOUR ATK IS AT LEAST 3x HIGHER THAN ALL THE CREATURES IN THE NEXT TWO REALMS. IT'S BASICALLY A RECIPE TO MAKE YOUR CHARACTER RIDICULOUSLY OP!
DANG, ELI. YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON I KNOW WHO CAN TURN BLOOD KNIGHTS II INTO MATH HOMEWORK.
DON'T WORRY, I'LL KEEP CARRYING OUR PARTY, BRETT. YOU JUST POINT ME IN THE DIRECTION I SHOULD SWING MY BLADE.
LEAVE THE NERD-STUFF TO THE NERDS, I GUESS.
IF YOU WERE AS CONFIDENT IN REAL LIFE AS YOU ARE ONLINE, THAT HOT GIRL WOULD BE HERE INSTEAD OF ME. TOO BAD WE CAN'T JUST LEVEL UP YOUR CHARISMA.
GEE, THANKS.
FORGET ABOUT IT, MAN. WE'RE AT A CONCERT. LOOSEN UP AND TRY TO HAVE A GOOD TIME. I'VE SEEN NPC'S* MORE EXCITING THAN YOU.
BZZT BZZT
*NON-PLAYABLE CHARACTERS.
SCHRÖ-DANGER'S CAT
I CAN BE EXCITING.
HA! THIS IS THE MOST ADVENTUROUS THING YOU'VE DONE SINCE WE GOT ON THE WRONG BUS AND ENDED UP AT A DIFFERENT SCHOOL.
THAT WASN'T EXCITING, THAT WAS TERRIFYING.
HANG ON, I GOT A TEXT.

MOM
Hey sweetie! Sorry I couldn't drive you kids to the concert tonight. Working late! Be safe, and don't let Brett get you into trouble!!
I love you, Elias!
IS THAT YOUR MOM? TELL HER I SAID WASSUP.
DON'T BE GROSS, DUDE.
I'M JUST SAYIN', SINCE YOUR OLD MAN DISAPPEARED, SHE'S GONNA NEED--
I'M GONNA STOP YOU RIGHT THERE.
HAHA, ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT...BUT YOU KNOW SHE'S PROBABLY ALREADY DATING SOME NEW DUDE.
NO WAY.
C'MON, ALL THESE "LATE NIGHTS AT WORK?" PLUS, LET'S FACE REALITY, YOUR MOM-- AND, AS YOUR BEST FRIEND, I FEEL I CAN SAY THIS-- IS SMOKIN' HOT!
*DOOPEEBOOPEEDOOPEEBOOPEEDOO
*BWAVZAW BWAVZAW BWAVZAW BWAVZAW
*KCH KCH KCH KCH KCH KCH KCH KCH
AH! THIS IS COMPLETE GARBAGE!

HAVOS
EMPEROR ATILUS' CASTLE.
I EXPECT YOU HAVE GOOD NEWS.
MY EMPEROR, I'VE FOUND THE FYMIERA SLAIN BY Pprincess SYBIL, AND DR. HORUK. I SUSPECT THEY'RE CLOSE.
DO NOT WASTE MY TIME WITH SPECULATION, GENERAL GUNNAR.

THAT TRAITOR HAS KIDNAPPED MY DAUGHTER, AND ABANDONED HIS ROYAL DUTY. HORUK IS IMPERATIVE TO THE PORTAL'S OPERATION. HIS TREACHERY WILL NOT IMPEDE OUR PLANS!
DO NOT CONTACT ME UNLESS YOU HAVE HIM IN YOUR CUSTODY.
UNDERSTOOD, EMPEROR ATILUS.

AND YOU, HAVOS' BRIGHTEST MINDS. HORUK'S BETRAYAL IS IRRELEVANT. THIS PORTAL OPENS REGARDLESS OF HIS ABSENCE...

...OR YOU'LL FIND THOSE BRIGHT MINDS SPRAYED ACROSS THE FLOOR.

ALRIGHT PRINCESS SYBIL, THE PORTAL SHOULD LEAD RIGHT TO YOUR ALTERNATE'S GENERAL VICINITY!
SO, WE'RE LOOKING FOR SOME OTHER VERSION OF ME THAT'S SOMEHOW GOING TO HELP US?
MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT, BUT YEAH, THAT'S THE BASIC IDEA!
OH, I'VE ALSO UPLOADED A WHOLE BUNCH OF NEW SOFTWARE ON YOUR WRIST-COMMS, INCLUDING A LANGUAGE TRANSLATOR FOR EARTH!
AND A RESTITUTION SOFTWARE DRIVER IN CASE OF EMERGENCY!
A REST OF WHAT--?
THANK YOU, RILEY. IF THEY COME AFTER US, STAY HIDDEN AT ALL COSTS. SYBIL AND I WILL HANDLE MY BROTHER'S FORCES.
DON'T WORRY, DR. HORUK. I HAVE SCIENCE ON MY SIDE.
FANTASTIC. ARE WE ALL READY TO GO?

VVVVZZZZZZZZHHHHHH
BBZZKKRRRCCKKOOOOOKKK!!!
READY TO ROCK, DOC!
GRRRR

HE'S LITERALLY PLAYING THAT OLD TIMEY INTERNET MODEM SOUND! I CHANGED MY MIND-- THIS IS AMAZING!
WHAT?!
BZZZZHT
KRRRHHK
KRRRHKK
ZZHKRHKZZT
ATTENTION PEOPLE OF EARTH! YOU ARE IN IMMENSE DANGER!
BASSPLOSH

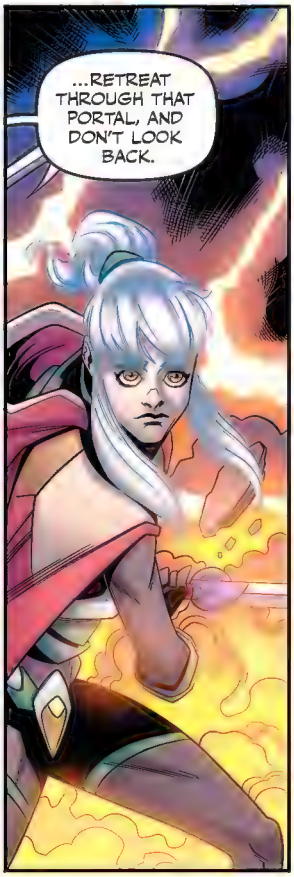
"I AM DR. HORUK, AND THIS IS MY NIECE, SYBIL.
"WE ARE DIPLOMATS FROM ANOTHER WORLD, AND DESPERATELY SEEK YOUR AID.
"ONE WARRIOR IN PARTICULAR IS AMONG YOU TONIGHT, AND IS KEY TO OUR SUCCESS.
"THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME. OUR ENEMIES ARE LIKELY CLOSE BEHIND US."
FETCH.
IS THIS PART OF THE SHOW? WE'RE NEVER COMING TO AN E.D.M. CONCERT AGAIN.
I DON'T KNOW MAN, THAT GRAY GIRL IS PRETTY HOT.
THAT GRAY GIRL? ARE YOU LISTENING TO YOURSELF?
ANY AND ALL WARRIORS OF EARTH, COME FORWARD NOW!
...I BESEECH YOU!
--HORUK! GET DOWN!

NOW!
ARRRRGH!!

YOU WERE WRONG, HORUK! THIS PLACE HAS NO SOLDIERS! NNGH! THIS IS USELESS! WE NEED TO GO BACK TO HAVOS!--

THESE PEOPLE AREN'T OUR RESPONSIBILITY! WE NEED TO--
SYBIL, GREAT WARRIORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVING LIVES WHENEVER CAPABLE.

I'VE ALWAYS FELT YOU WOULD BE A GREAT WARRIOR ONE DAY, BUT IF TODAY IS NOT THAT DAY...


...RETREAT THROUGH THAT PORTAL, AND DON'T LOOK BACK.

IS THIS THE KIND OF EXCITEMENT YOU WANTED?! WE'RE GOING TO GET KILLED!
FOR ONCE, I AGREE WITH YOU. NOT EXCITING, TERRIFYING.

AAAGGHH!!
SKLUNCH
UNCLE HORUK!!
ZUUUM
DON'T MOVE! I'M ON MY--
AGGH!
HMPH.
THAT'S ENOUGH FROM YOU, TRAITOR.

HORUK-- COME IN! THE WAR GENERAL IS ON HIS WAY!
I'M GATHERING MEDICAL AID, AND GOING THROUGH.
NO! RILEY, STAY HIDDEN! IF I'M CAPTURED, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE THAT KNOWS HOW TO ACTIVATE THE PORTAL!
DR. HORUK...
AAUGH!
...IT'S TIME TO GO HOME AND FACE YOUR EMPEROR.

NNNNGGGHHH...
WHOA, IT'S THE GRAY CHICK! SHE LOOKS PRETTY MESSED UP...
HEY, YOU ALRIGHT? WE HAVE TO GET OUTTA HERE.
I'M FINE.
WHAT THE HELL!? WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?
BACK UP, ELI! SHE'S PROBABLY RADIOACTIVE OR SOMETHING!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
BUT YOU'RE NOT A WARRIOR. AND YOU'RE... A BOY.
HEY! STOP!
ELI, RIGHT? MY NAME IS SYBIL. A WARRIOR FROM HAVOS.
LISTEN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN, BUT SOMEHOW... I KNOW THIS IS OUR ONLY CHANCE TO SAVE EVERYONE.
I NEED YOU TO TRUST ME...AND TAKE MY HAND.
...
I DO.
--YOU WHAT!?

SYBIL, I HOPE YOU KNOW...
"...WHAT YOU'RE DOING!"
UNREAL...!

PRINCESS SYBIL?!
"WAIT--! I CAN'T MOVE MY LEGS!
"THAT THING IS COMING RIGHT FOR US!
"WHOA-- WHERE DID YOU GO?!
"WHERE DID I GO!?
"UH, SYBIL, RIGHT? WHAT'S GOING ON?
"AAHH! I KILLED IT! I KILLED THE ROBO-DOG!!
"THESE FYMIERA JUST KEEP COMING! WAIT, WHY DO I KNOW THAT WORD?
"WHAT IS HAPPENING?!
"WHY AM I A GIRL?!
SHUT UP, ELI!

THIS IS MADNESS!
OH, NO YOU DON'T.
"NO, DON'T KILL HIM!
"NO!
HEY!
THCK!
AAAAHHH!!!
SLAM!

GREAT JOB, ELI! THAT WAS THE PORTAL BACK TO HAVOS!
"YOU WERE-- I MEAN, I WAS-- NO, WE WERE GONNA KILL THAT GUY! I'M NOT A MURDERER!
FROM THE LOOK OF IT YOU SURE AS HELL DIDN'T SAVE HIM!
UH, ELI? BUDDY, IS THAT YOU IN THERE?
BRETT?
"BRETT? I DON'T FEEL SO GOO--"
I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD...
FSSSHHHH
WHAT THE HELL JUST HAPPENED!?
UNNGGHH...
...WE NEED TO FIND HORUK.

DEAR BROTHER, I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU FOUND YOUR WAY BACK HOME.
HORUK!
ATILUS, PLEASE... >COUGH< YOU MUST SEE REASON! THE PEOPLE OF EARTH ARE NOT AMMUNITION FOR YOUR FABRICATED WAR. >COUGH< THEY ARE--
OUR ALTERNATES ARE THE KEY TO MAKING HAVOS THE MOST POWERFUL WORLD IN EXISTENCE!
I WISH YOU UNDERSTOOD, HORUK. YOU'VE MADE IT CLEAR YOUR IGNORANCE IS NO LONGER A NUISANCE, BUT A DANGER TO ACHIEVING OUR TRUE POTENTIAL.
TELL ME, BROTHER. WHO AIDED YOU IN YOUR ESCAPE?
I AM NOT THE ONLY PERSON IN HAVOS WHO THINKS YOU'VE TURNED MAD.
WHAT OF SYBIL? IS SHE SAFE?
SHE'S SAFE, MY QUEEN. I PROMISE.
YOU'VE BROUGHT MY DAUGHTER TO EARTH, HAVEN'T YOU?

WHICH MEANS YOUR YOUNG LAB ASSISTANT HAS ALSO MASTERED PORTAL TECHNOLOGY.
LEAVE RILEY OUT OF THIS!
ONCE I FIND HER, I'M CONFIDENT SHE WILL BE MUCH EASIER TO CONTROL.
YOU'VE MADE YOURSELF REDUNDANT, HORUK. MY PORTAL WILL OPEN.
AND WORSE, YOU'VE SHAMED YOUR FAMILY. WE HAVE NO USE FOR A BROTHER WHO PLOTS TO RUIN ME AND ALL I'VE ACCOMPLISHED.
ATILUS, NO! WAIT!!
NOW, WE CAN PROCEED.
TO BE CONTINUED IN
Portal Bound #2!

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# PORTAL BOUND

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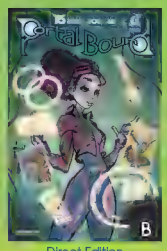

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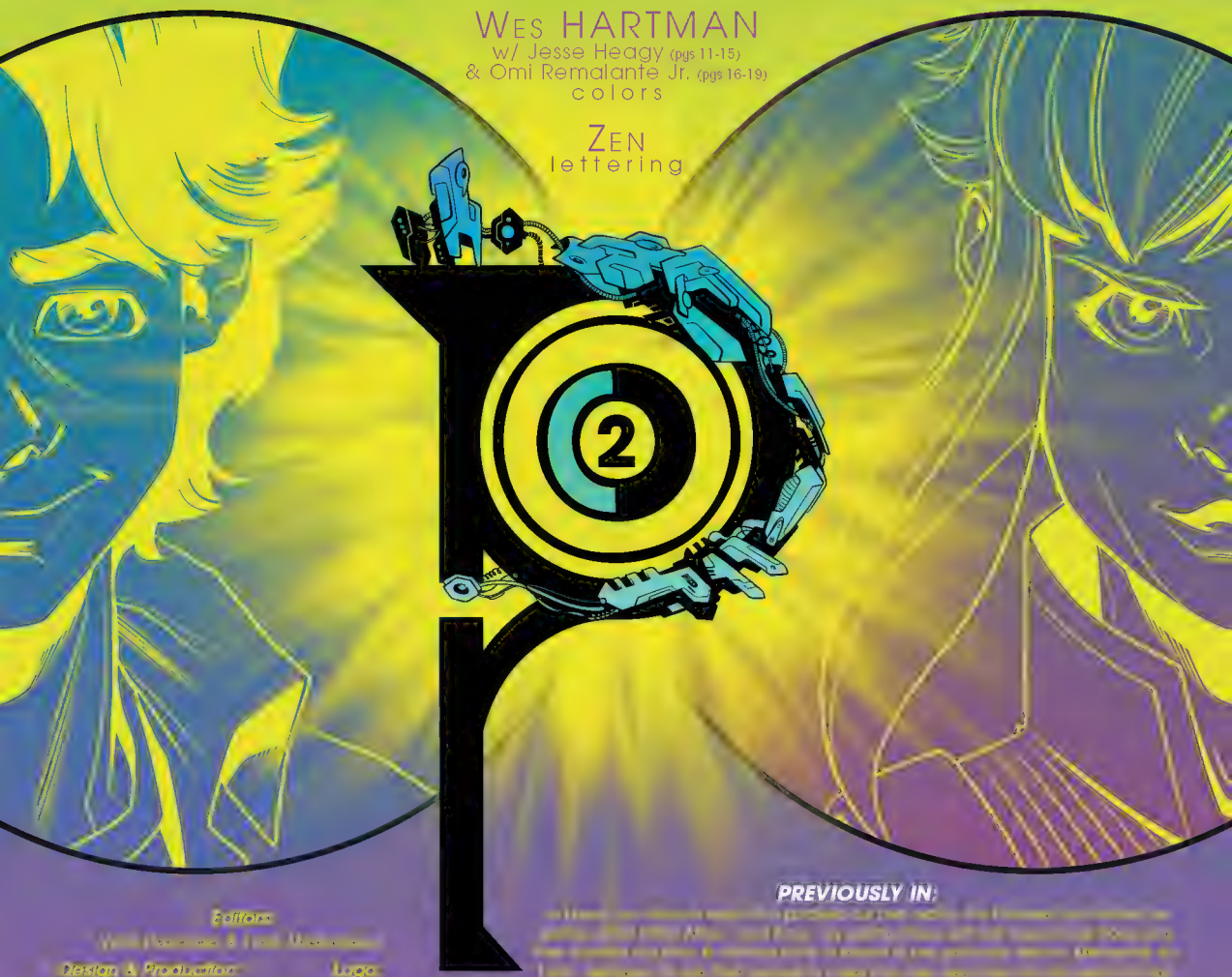
by -Adam Archer

Mark ROSLAN & Gabe CARRASCO
story

Alex ARIZMENDI
pencils & digital inks

Wes HARTMAN
w/ Jesse Heagy (pgs 11-15)
& Omi Remalante Jr. (pgs 16-19)
colors

Zen
lettering



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PORTAL BOUND created by MARK ROSLAN & GABE CARRASCO

For Aspen: Founder: Michael Turner Co-Owner: Peter Steigerwald Co-Owner/President: Frank Mastromauro
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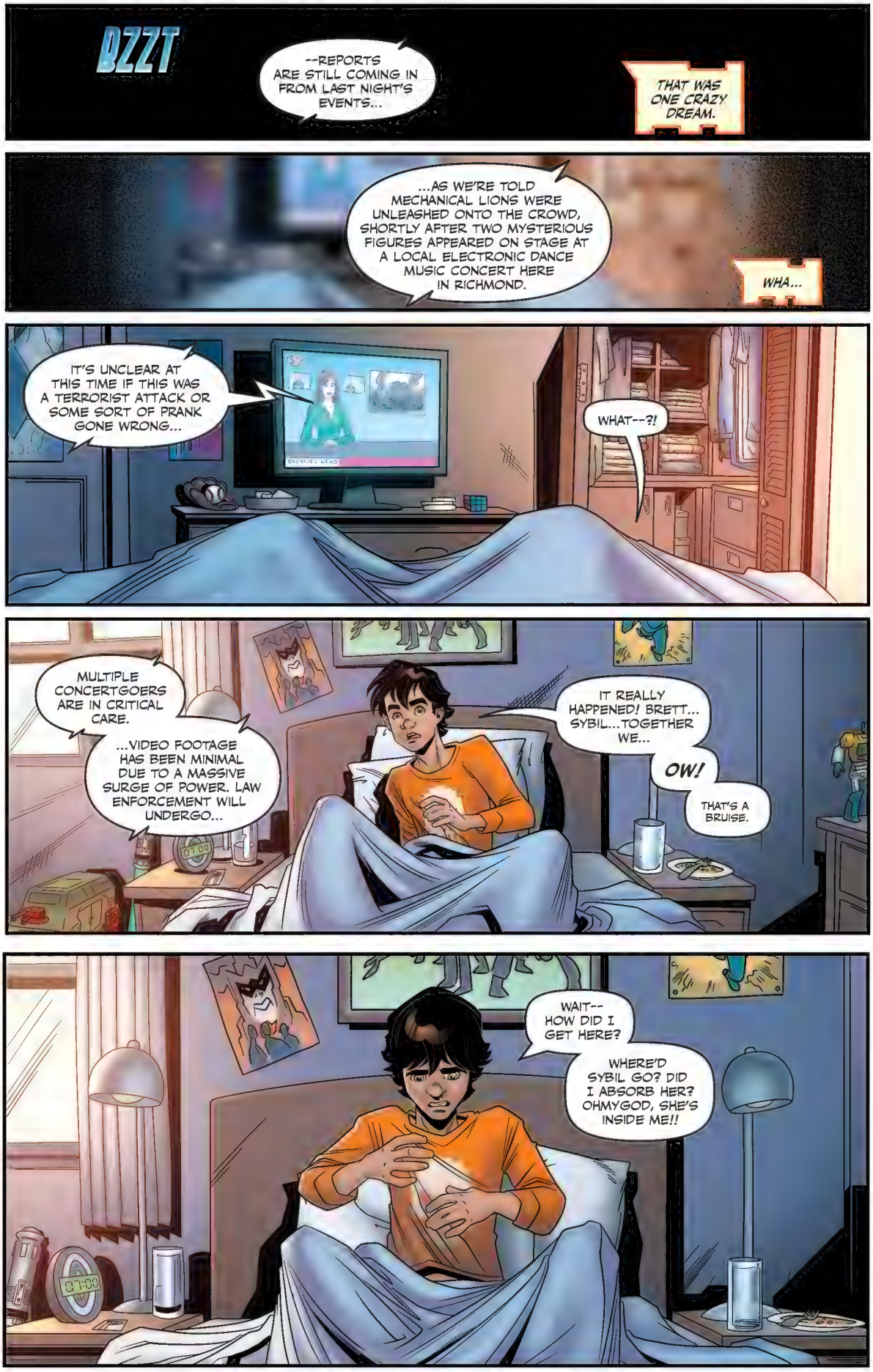
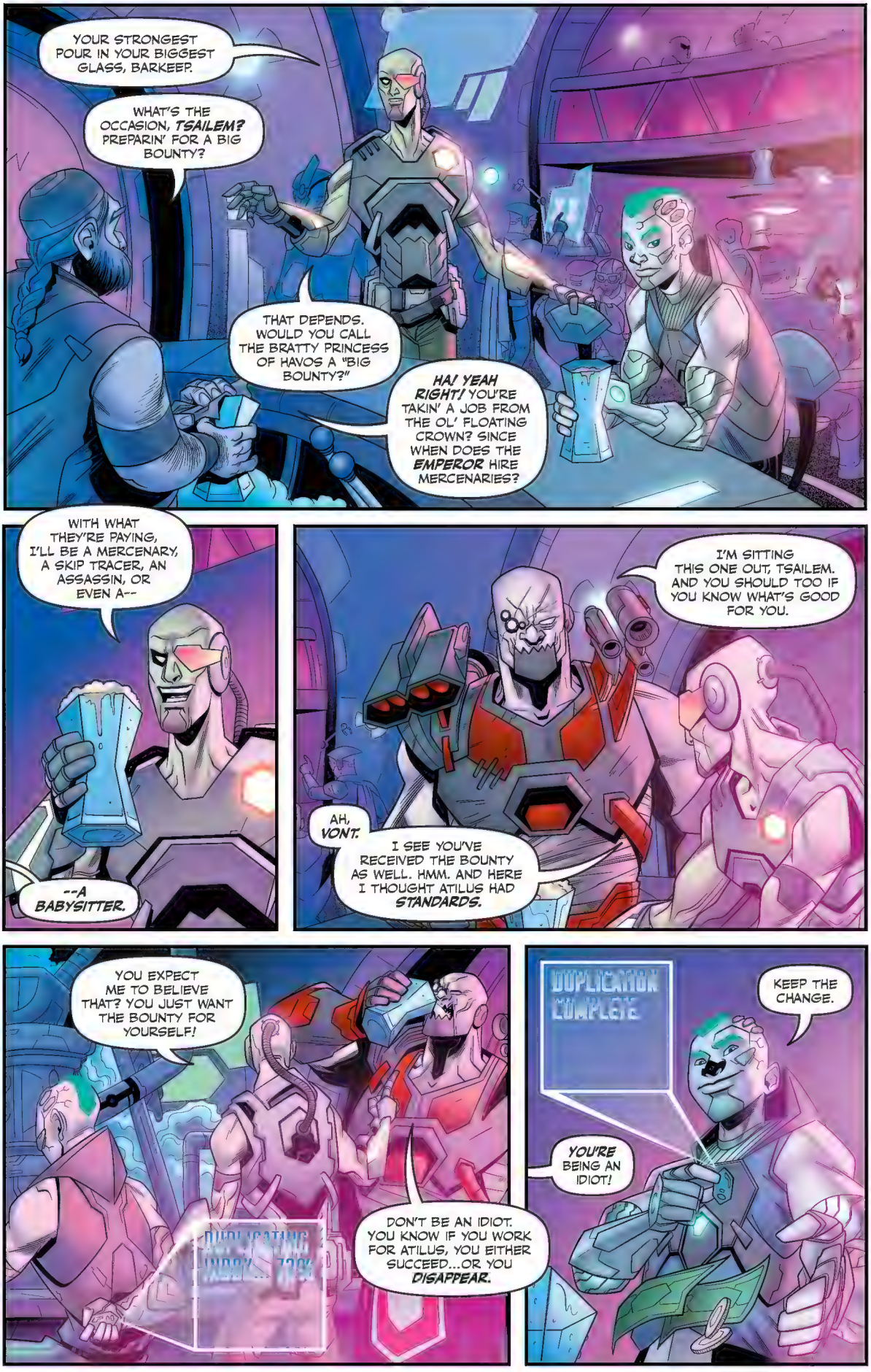

DZZT
--REPORTS ARE STILL COMING IN FROM LAST NIGHT'S EVENTS...
THAT WAS ONE CRAZY DREAM.
...AS WE'RE TOLD MECHANICAL LIONS WERE UNLEASHED ONTO THE CROWD, SHORTLY AFTER TWO MYSTERIOUS FIGURES APPEARED ON STAGE AT A LOCAL ELECTRONIC DANCE MUSIC CONCERT HERE IN RICHMOND.
WHA...
IT'S UNCLEAR AT THIS TIME IF THIS WAS A TERRORIST ATTACK OR SOME SORT OF PRANK GONE WRONG...
WHAT--?!
MULTIPLE CONCERTGOERS ARE IN CRITICAL CARE.
...VIDEO FOOTAGE HAS BEEN MINIMAL DUE TO A MASSIVE SURGE OF POWER. LAW ENFORCEMENT WILL UNDERGO...
IT REALLY HAPPENED! BRETT... SYBIL...TOGETHER WE...
OW!
THAT'S A BRUISE.
WAIT-- HOW DID I GET HERE?
WHERE'D SYBIL GO? DID I ABSORB HER? OHMYGOD, SHE'S INSIDE ME!!

NOPE! RIGHT HERE!
EARTH
AH! DON'T DO THAT!
YOUR BLADES HAVE EXTREMELY WEAK METAL.
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S A GAME OF CASTLES REPLICA.
MEN OF OUTHERE
YOU CARRY A TOY SWORD?
ARE YOU A GENERAL OF SORTS HERE, THEN?
NO. LIKE I TOLD YOU LAST NIGHT... JUST A HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT. A NORMAL TEENAGER.
SNAAP
YOU'RE CLEARLY NOT THE WARRIOR MY UNCLE THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE.
WHATHEHELL!
ELIAS? ARE YOU AWAKE? BREAKFAST IS ALMOST READY, HUN.
CRAP-- SYBIL, YOU HAVE TO HIDE! MY MOM WILL SEE YOU!
FOOD? GREAT! I'M STARVING. I MUST DRINK BLOOD EVERY DAY.
EWWW-- REALLY?
NO!! GET ME A SANDWICH AND THEN WE HAVE TO GET MOVING!

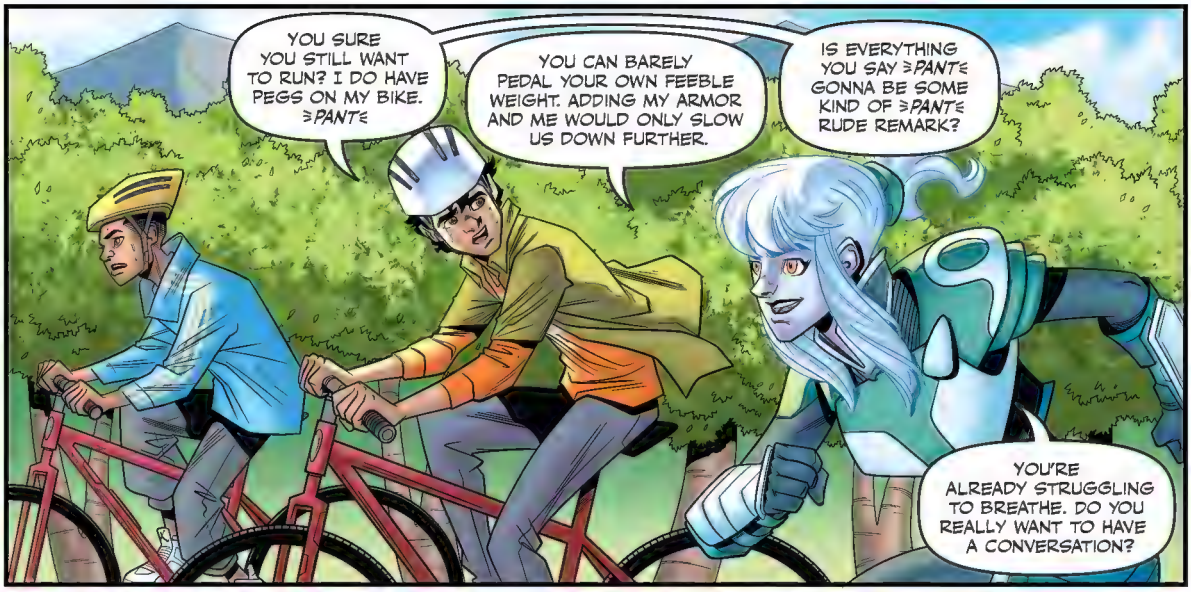
WAIT-- AFTER THE CONCERT, HOW DID WE GET BACK HERE? WHAT HAPPENED AFTER WE...FUSED?
YOUR FRIEND BRETT LED US HERE. HE WALKED YOUR BIKES WHILE I CARRIED YOU. YOU'RE SURPRISINGLY LIGHTWEIGHT. LIKE A CHILD!
AGAIN, I'M A TEENAGER. WHY WERE THOSE FYMIERA TRYING TO KILL US?
...AND WHY DO I KNOW THAT WORD?
THEY WERE SENT BY MY FATHER TO RETRIEVE HORUK AND I. HE ACCOMPLISHED HALF HIS MISSION...
I-- I SEEM TO HAVE A FEW NEW WORDS IN MY HEAD TOO...LIKE "DOGS", "LIONS" AND "VIDEO GAME." I THINK IT MAY BE A SIDE EFFECT OF OUR FUSION.
HUN? IS THERE SOMEONE ELSE IN THERE?
BRETT'S DOWN HERE WAITING FOR YOU.
IS YOUR MOTHER ALSO A QUEEN?
HEY!
TSHTT! BE QUIET AND DON'T MOVE!
HEY, SWEETIE. I THOUGHT I HEARD VOICES.
UM...JUST THE T.V. MOM. I'LL BE DOWN IN SEC.
IS EVERYTHING, ALL RIGHT? HOW WAS THE CONCERT?
CRAZY! CRAZY, UH... CRAZY FUN.
YEAH, WELL, BREAKFAST IS DONE, AND BRETT'S HERE... EARLY. HOP TO IT!

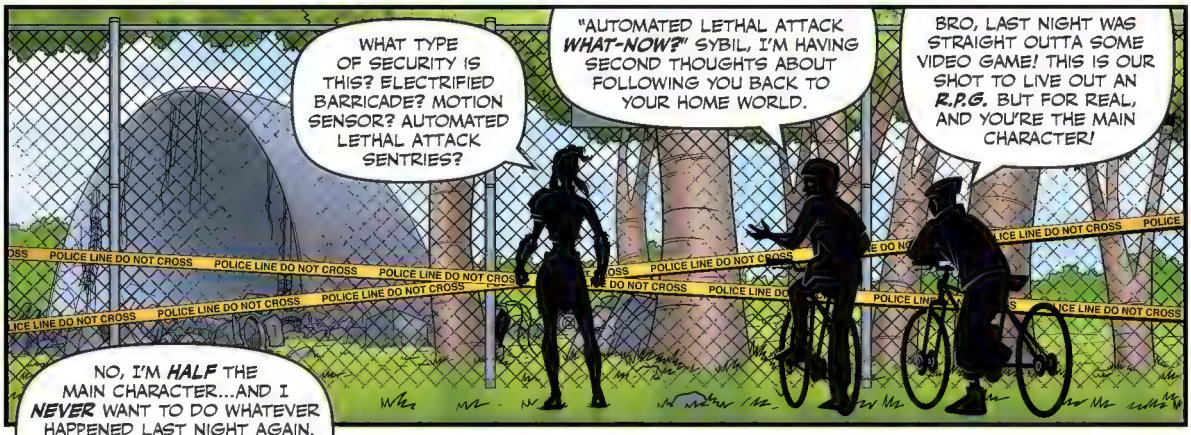
PHEEWWW--!
SHE IS DEFINITELY NOT A QUEEN HERE.
BAMM
IKNEWIT!
WHO THE HELL IS THIS GIRL AND WHAT IS SHE DOING IN YOUR ROOM!
AHHH!
ELIAS RIVERA, YOU BETTER HAVE A VERY GOOD EXPLANATION FOR THIS.
YES. LET'S GO DOWNSTAIRS AND I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING.
MOM, THIS IS SYBIL, A...FRIEND FROM SCHOOL.
HI, FRIEND, SYBIL. NICE COSTUME!
COSTUME?
MOM...THE NEWS... THE CONCERT. ≥SIGH≤ MOM, LAST NIGHT THE CONCERT WAS AMBUSHED AND IT TURNED INTO CHAOS. IT'S ALL OVER THE NEWS-- LOOK!
WHAT? WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SHE WAS AT THE CONCERT AND WAS SCARED TO GO HOME. IT'S COMPLICATED.
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.

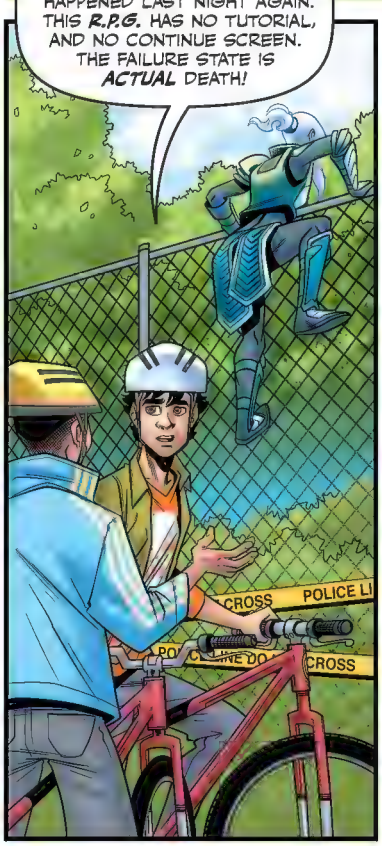
--BUT WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL ME?
MOM, OUR PHONES DIDN'T WORK AFTER THE BLAST--
MRS. RIVERA, I CAN VOUCH FOR WHAT SOUNDS LIKE CRAZY TALK FROM ELI. EVERYONE THERE THOUGHT IT WAS PART OF THE SHOW UNTIL THOSE LIONS STARTED ATTACKING PEOPLE. WE RACED OUR BIKES BACK HERE.
AND SYBIL HERE IS A NEW ECCENTRIC FRIEND FROM SCHOOL WHO HAS... UM...PROBLEMS WITH HER DAD AT HOME, SO WE BROUGHT HER BACK HERE TOO AND WE ALL CRASHED AFTER THE ADRENALINE RUSH. RIGHT, SYBIL?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY.
OH, JEEZ. I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS HAPPENED TO YOU KIDS. THIS NEIGHBORHOOD IS GETTING WORSE AND WORSE--
BRING BRING
IT'S YOUR DAD'S SISTER. I SHOULD TAKE IT. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK, EVERYONE PAUSE.
WE'VE WASTED ENOUGH TIME HERE. WE HAVE TO GET BACK TO HAVOS AND YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, ELI.
WE'LL TAKE YOU TO THE CAMPGROUNDS, BUT'S THAT'S WHERE THIS CRAZINESS ENDS.
ELI, SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO UNCLE JOE. I HAVE TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL. WE'RE NOT DONE HERE. GO TO SCHOOL AND WE'LL TALK WHEN I GET HOME TONIGHT. I'LL TEXT YOU LATER.
I HOPE UNCLE JOE IS ALL RIGHT-- AND IT'S SATURDAY! WE'RE GOING TO BRETT'S. DON'T WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT US. WE'RE PRACTICALLY ADULTS.

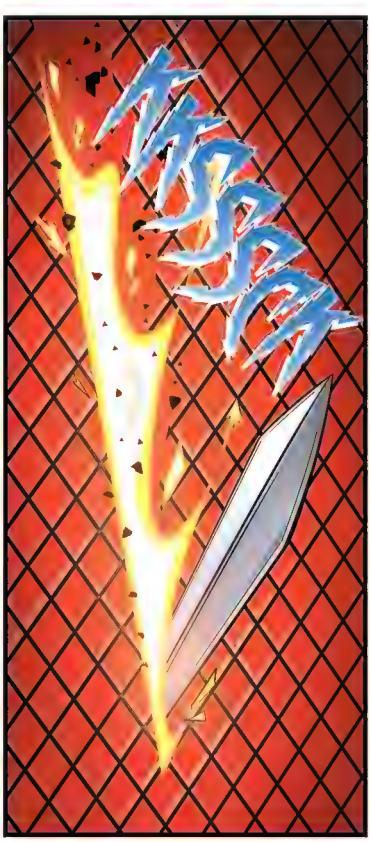

YOUR STRONGEST POUR IN YOUR BIGGEST GLASS, BARKEEP.
WHAT'S THE OCCASION, TSAILEM? PREPARIN' FOR A BIG BOUNTY?
THAT DEPENDS. WOULD YOU CALL THE BRATTY PRINCESS OF HAVOS A "BIG BOUNTY?"
HA! YEAH RIGHT! YOU'RE TAKIN' A JOB FROM THE OL' FLOATING CROWN? SINCE WHEN DOES THE EMPEROR HIRE MERCENARIES?
WITH WHAT THEY'RE PAYING, I'LL BE A MERCENARY, A SKIP TRACER, AN ASSASSIN, OR EVEN A--
--A BABYSITTER.
I'M SITTING THIS ONE OUT, TSAILEM. AND YOU SHOULD TOO IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU.
AH, VONT.
I SEE YOU'VE RECEIVED THE BOUNTY AS WELL. HMM. AND HERE I THOUGHT ATILUS HAD STANDARDS.
YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT? YOU JUST WANT THE BOUNTY FOR YOURSELF!
DUPLICATING
DON'T BE AN IDIOT. YOU KNOW IF YOU WORK FOR ATILUS, YOU EITHER SUCCEED...OR YOU DISAPPEAR.
DUPLICATION COMPLETE
KEEP THE CHANGE.
YOU'RE BEING AN IDIOT!

RILEY'S SECRET SATELLITE LABORATORY.
INTERCEPTED MESSAGE FROM
UH-OH...I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT.
IF TSAILEM SPENT LESS ON HIS FANCY ARMOR AND MORE ON HIS WRIST-COMM SECURITY, I'D BE OUT ONE SOLID PAYDAY.
IF YOU'VE RECEIVED THIS MESSAGE, YOU ARE OFFICIALLY IN MY EMPLOY.
WELL THAT'S DEFINITELY NOT A REQUEST.
PRINCESS SYBIL OF HAVOS HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED BY A ROGUE SCIENTIST WITH MALICIOUS INTENT. BRING THE DAUGHTER AND THE TRAITOROUS SCIENTIST BACK TO THE CASTLE. ALIVE.
WANTED
ALTHOUGH, I DO LIKE THE SOUND OF "ALIVE," I'M NOT CRAZY ABOUT THE TERM "TRAITOROUS."
...AT LEAST "ROGUE SCIENTIST," SOUNDS PRETTY FANTASTIC.
YOU WILL HAVE ACCESS TO ALL OF HAVOS' ASSETS, INCLUDING ALL CLASSES OF THE BIOMECHANICAL TRACKING BEASTS.
AND MY OWN FYMIERA? LOOKS LIKE I'M GETTING SOME WINGS.
OKAY. RELAX, RILEY. IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT! SYBIL CAN PROTECT US FROM A FEW BONEHEAD BOUNTY HUNTERS. PLUS, EMPEROR ATILUS DOESN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE WE ARE!
WANTED
WANTED
...ATTACHED ARE THE COORDINATES TO THEIR LAST KNOWN LOCATION. DO NOT FAIL ME.
...AWW, GAMUT.


YOU SURE YOU STILL WANT TO RUN? I DO HAVE PEGS ON MY BIKE. ≥PANT≤
YOU CAN BARELY PEDAL YOUR OWN FEEBLE WEIGHT. ADDING MY ARMOR AND ME WOULD ONLY SLOW US DOWN FURTHER.
IS EVERYTHING YOU SAY ≥PANT≤ GONNA BE SOME KIND OF ≥PANT≤ RUDE REMARK?
YOU'RE ALREADY STRUGGLING TO BREATHE. DO YOU REALLY WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?


WHAT TYPE OF SECURITY IS THIS? ELECTRIFIED BARRICADE? MOTION SENSOR? AUTOMATED LETHAL ATTACK SENTRIES?
"AUTOMATED LETHAL ATTACK ***WHAT-NOW?***" SYBIL, I'M HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT FOLLOWING YOU BACK TO YOUR HOME WORLD.
BRO, LAST NIGHT WAS STRAIGHT OUTTA SOME VIDEO GAME! THIS IS OUR SHOT TO LIVE OUT AN ***R.P.G.*** BUT FOR REAL, AND YOU'RE THE MAIN CHARACTER!
POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS


NO, I'M ***HALF*** THE MAIN CHARACTER...AND I ***NEVER*** WANT TO DO WHATEVER HAPPENED LAST NIGHT AGAIN. THIS ***R.P.G.*** HAS NO TUTORIAL, AND NO CONTINUE SCREEN. THE FAILURE STATE IS ***ACTUAL*** DEATH!
CROSS
POLICE LI
CROSS


KSSH

WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!
THERE WAS NO WAY YOU COULD CLIMB THAT FENCE.
HA. SHE 'AINT WRONG.

SYBIL, YOU DON'T REALLY NEED US, RIGHT? WHAT ARE TWO WEAK HUMANS GOING TO DO FOR YOUR CAUSE?
YO, DON'T ADD ME TO YOUR WEAK-SAUCE ROSTER.
YOU'RE COMING BACK TO HAVOS SO I CAN USE YOU TO SAVE MY MOTHER AND UNCLE FROM EMPEROR ATILUS.
ONCE YOU'VE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE, I'M SURE RILEY CAN SEND YOU BACK TO THIS DUMP-OF-A-WORLD WITH YOUR TOY SWORDS AND COMPLETE LACK OF ATHLETIC ABILITY.
MORE LIKE ***PATHETIC*** ABILITY, ***AM I RIGHT?***
THIS IS WHAT'S LEFT OF THOSE ROBOT-DOGS? THEY JUST TURNED INTO GOO?
WATCH YOUR STEP. THE FYMIERA REMNANT IS EXTREMELY ACIDIC, IT WILL MELT THE CLOTH AND RUBBER RIGHT OFF YOUR SHOES.
I WAS AIMING FOR THE WAR GENERAL, NOT OUR ***ONLY*** PATH BACK TO HAVOS!
***ME?!*** YOU'RE THE ONE THAT SHOT A GIANT ARROW INTO IT!
I CAN'T. COMMUNICATION'S BEEN DOWN SINCE YOU DESTROYED THE PORTAL.
*SIGH* OF COURSE IT WILL.
HERE'S THE STAGE-- OR WHAT'S LEFT OF IT. SO, WHAT NOW? YOU CALL YOUR FRIEND AND HAVE HER OPEN THE PORTAL?

OH, RILEY MENTIONED A PROGRAM SHE UPLOADED ONTO MY WRIST-COMM IN CASE THE PORTAL HAD CLOSED...
...BUT HER EXPLANATION WAS TOO BORING TO REMEMBER.
HANG ON. THIS LOOKS LIKE COMPUTER CODE. LET ME SEE THAT SCREEN.
THIS IS THE SAME DIRECTORY FORMAT AS MOST OPERATING SYSTEMS.
THERE IS NO WAY YOU CAN READ THIS--
I THINK I FOUND IT. PORTAL RESTITUTION SOFTWARE DRIVER. THAT SOUNDS RIGHT... RIGHT?
OH, SNAP! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!
HUH. LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE NOT TOTALLY USELESS, ELI.
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU KIDS DOING?! THIS PLACE IS OFF-LIMITS!
SHOULD I KILL HIM?
WHAT?! NO! STOP TRYING TO KILL PEOPLE!
SHE'S KIDDING, OFFICER. AND WE'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING ILLEGAL! WE SWEAR!
MAN, THAT 'AINT EVEN THE POLICE. THAT'S SOME RENT-A-COP.
COME ON, ELI.
REALLY SORRY ABOUT THIS, SIR, BUT WE HAVE TO GET GOING.
WAIT! KIDS! YOU SHOULDN'T TOUCH ANYTHING! IT COULD BE--
--DANGEROUS.

HAVOS
WELCOME TO HAVOS.
WHOA...
THIS PLACE IS... BEAUTIFUL.
PRprincess SYBIL!
≥NHFF≤
YOU MADE IT BACK! I DIDN'T THINK YOU WERE LISTENING ABOUT THE RESTITUTION SOFTWARE I HAD INSTALLED, BUT-- AH! HERE YOU ARE! THERE IS SO MUCH I NEED TO TELL YOU! SINCE YOU'VE BEEN GONE I'VE INTERCEPTED A MESSAG--
--WAIT. WHO ARE THEY?
RILEY, MEET ELIAS AND BRETT FROM EARTH. APPARENTLY, ELI IS MY ALTERNATE YOU WERE TALKING ABOU--
ELIAS FROM EARTH! THIS. IS. FASCINATING! AN ALTERNATE OF OPPOSITE GENDER! AND A GENERAL LACK OF MUSCLE MASS... PLUS YOUR SILENCE AND BAD POSTURE DENOTE A GENERALLY HUMBLE DISPOSITION.
UM... THANKS?
A STATEMENT OF GRATITUDE! YOUR DIFFERENCES WITH PRINCESS SYBIL OUTNUMBER YOUR SIMILARITIES! THIS POSES INFINITELY MORE QUESTIONS!
HA! YOU SHOULD A BEEN THERE EARLIER. WE WERE TALKING ABOUT ELI'S ATHLETIC ABILITY, AND I WAS ALL "MORE LIKE PATHE--"
NOT NOW, BRETT.
WHY IS BRETT FROM EARTH ACCOMPANYING YOU?
HE INSPIRES CONFIDENCE IN ELI. PLUS, HE'S FUNNY.
SPECTACULAR!

RILEY, LISTEN. SOME FYMIERA BACK ON EARTH ATTACKED HORUK AND ME, AND BEFORE I COULD HELP HIM, HORUK WAS TAKEN THROUGH THE PORTAL.
THAT'S TERRIBLE! I COULDN'T MONITOR THE PORTAL WHILE I WAS CLOAKED, BUT I DID HEAR ONE FYMIERA RUN THROUGH HERE. IT SOUNDED LIKE IT WAS HEADING TOWARD THE CASTLE.
PERFECT. ELI AND I CAN FUSE, TAKE DOWN ATILUS, AND SAVE BOTH HORUK AND MY MOTHER.
HANG ON, FUSE? NO. NO WAY I'M DOING THAT AGAIN. THAT WAS SUPER WEIRD. I DON'T AGREE TO ANY OF THIS!
BUT DIDN'T IT FEEL AMAZING TO YOU? WHY WOULDN'T YOU WANT TO DO IT AGAIN?
BRETT FROM EARTH, AREN'T YOU GOING TO INSPIRE CONFIDENCE?
DANG, MY ONLY SHOT IN A REAL LIFE VIDEO GAME, AND I'M SOME WHACK SUPPORT CHARACTER.
WE BARELY HAD ENOUGH ENERGY TO TAKE DOWN THOSE THREE FYMIERA-OR-WHATEVER. YOU WANT US TO TAKE DOWN SOME BIG SHOT EMPEROR? THAT'S FINAL BOSS LEVEL STUFF! I'M NOT READY TO--
ELI, THIS ISN'T A STUPID VIDEO GAME!
SO IT'S TRUE. SYBIL, PRINCESS OF HAVOS IS JUST A WHINY BRAT.
BRETT, COME ON. THAT WAS UNCALLED FOR.
YO, THAT WASN'T ME! WHY WOULD I INSULT SOMEONE WITH A REAL SWORD?

PRINCESS. SCIENTIST. YOU ARE BOTH COMING WITH ME.
WHO ARE YOU?
THAT IS NOT INFORMATION YOU REQUI--
--I'VE HACKED HIS WRIST-COMM. HIS NAME IS OMEIL. HE'S A BOUNTY HUNTER.
AND WHAT IS A BOUNTY HUNTER DOING HERE?
DIDN'T I SAY? THE EMPEROR PUT A BOUNTY ON US.
NO, YOU DIDN'T MENTION THAT SMALL DETAIL.

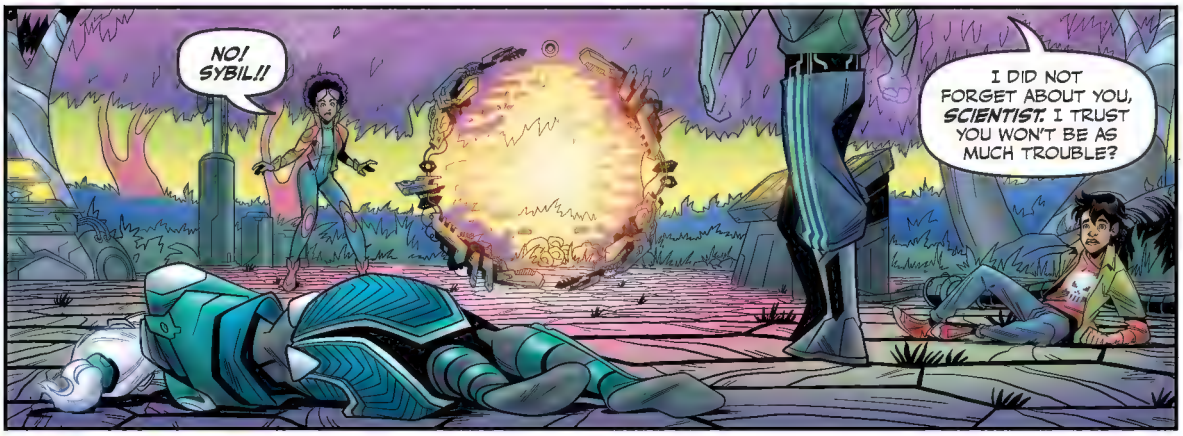
ATILUS!
YOU SENT WHAT AFTER OUR DAUGHTER?!
AND YOUR FYMIERA. IF ONE HAIR ON HER HEAD IS MISSING, SO HELP ME--
AH. MY QUEEN. MY LOVE.
YES, I'VE ALERTED THE BOUNTY HUNTERS TO RETRIEVE OUR DAUGHTER... UNHARMED.
THEY KNOW NOT TO DISAPPOINT THE CROWN.
OUR DAUGHTER WILL RETURN TO US. SHE WILL APOLOGIZE FOR JOINING HER BROTHER'S BETRAYAL AND STAND BY OUR SIDE ONCE AGAIN.
ATILUS... YOU-- DO YOU EVEN REALIZE YOU KILLED YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER?
I HAVEN'T LOST MY MIND, VANORA. ON THE CONTRARY, MY PATH HAS NEVER BEEN SO CLEAR. AND HE FAILED TO SEE THAT NO ONE BETRAYS ME.
NO ONE.

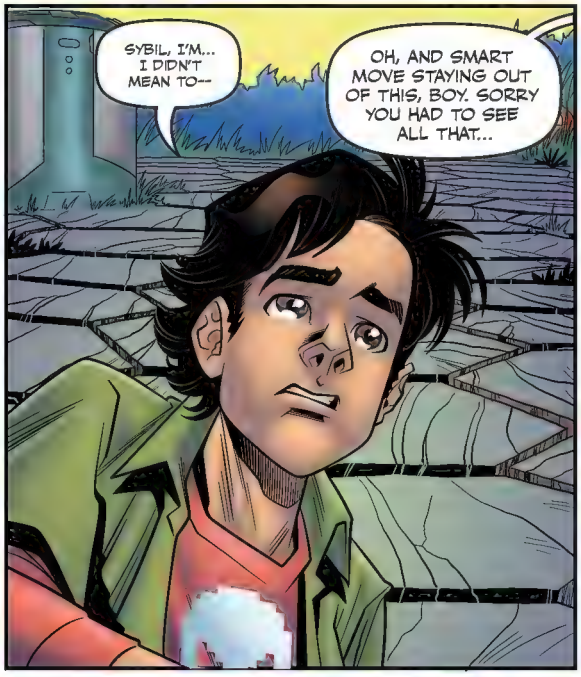
EMPEROR ATILUS, PLEASE, A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME!
WE BRING GOOD NEWS.
UM--YOU SEE, MY EMPEROR-- WE'VE DECRYPTED DR. HORUK'S TRANSFERENCE FREQUENCY ALGORITHM. THE SYSTEM'S APERTURE MECHANISM IS NOW ACTIVE.
YOU'VE ACTIVATED THE MACHINE? THE PORTALS ARE READY TO BE OPENED?
N--NOT YET, SIRE. BUT THE PROGRESS WE'VE MADE IS--
IS NOTHING IF THE PORTALS CANNOT OPEN.
SIRE, WE'VE BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY SINCE HORUK'S BETRAYAL. IF WE JUST GET A MOMENT OF REST PERHAPS...
IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE.
IF WHAT HORUK HAD SAID WAS TRUE, HIS ASSISTANT WAS ABLE TO OPERATE HER OWN PORTAL TO EARTH. ONCE WE RETRIEVE HER, SHE CAN MOVE OUR PLANS FORWARD.
NOW GET BACK TO WORK!
IF YOU WASTE MY TIME AGAIN, I WILL FEED YOU TO THE FYMIERA.

I THOUGHT THE LAB WAS CLOAKED! HOW DID HE EVEN FIND US?
WE USED THE ENTIRE ENERGY SUPPLY OPENING THE PORTAL TO EARTH! THE CLOAKING DEVICE HAS BEEN DOWN SINCE LAST NIGHT!
ANOTHER DETAIL YOU FORGOT TO MENTION!
COME NOW PRINCESS, IF YOU AND THE SCIENTIST COME QUIETLY YOU CAN KEEP THAT PRETTY FACE OF YOURS INTACT, AND I CAN GET PAID.
IT'S A WIN-WIN!
ELIAS, IF YOU ARE SYBIL'S ALTERNATE, YOU NEED TO FUSE, NOW! SHE WON'T LAST LONG AGAINST TWO FYMIERA!
BUT--
YOU'LL THANK ME LATER.
WAIT...!
FASCINATING...

BRING IT!
OOOHHH YEAH!! IT'S SYBELIUS TIME!!
SY-BELL-IUS?
YEAH, IT'S A COMBO OF "SYBIL" AND "ELIAS." THOUGHT OF IT MYSELF.
OH! I LOVE IT! GO SYBELIUS!!
WHAT ARE YOU?
I'M MORE TROUBLE THAN WHATEVER BOUNTY ATILUS IS PROMISING.
LEAVE. NOW.
HMM. THEN YOU CLEARLY DON'T KNOW JUST HOW MUCH IS ON THE TABLE.
"I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS, SYBIL!
ELI, WORK WITH ME HERE. I CAN'T FIGHT THESE THINGS IF I'M FIGHTING YOU FOR CONTROL!
"FIGHT THEM ON YOUR OWN! I JUST WANT TO GO BACK TO EARTH!
NNGH-- STOP BEING A CHILD!
THEY'RE NOT WORKING TOGETHER. THIS FORM LOOKS... UNSTABLE.
OH, MAN... WE'RE GONNA NEED A QUICK EXIT. CAN YOU FIRE UP THE PORTAL?
IT NEEDS TIME TO CHARGE.
GET IT STARTED. I'LL GO DISTRACT OATMEAL OVER THERE.
"CAN'T... FOCUS."
KEEP IT TOGETHER, ELI...!
RAAA-SHHHH!!!

NO!
⩾PANT⩽ ELI! WE NEED TO FINISH THIS!
NO, ⩾PANT⩽ WE NEED TO RETREAT...!
STOP BEING SUCH A COWARD! FOR ONCE IN YOUR PATHETIC LIFE, STAND UP AND FIGHT!
IT'S A NEAT TRICK...
...BUT YOUR FRIEND IS DOWN FOR THE COUNT.
I DON'T NEED THAT COWARD TO TAKE DOWN ONE MORE BIG PILE OF MUCK...
...OR THE FYMIERA YOU FLEW IN ON.
SLOPPY--
NGGFF!
--AND PATHETIC.


NO! SYBIL!!
I DID NOT FORGET ABOUT YOU, SCIENTIST. I TRUST YOU WON'T BE AS MUCH TROUBLE?


SYBIL, I'M... I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
OH, AND SMART MOVE STAYING OUT OF THIS, BOY. SORRY YOU HAD TO SEE ALL THAT...

...IT'S JUST BUSINESS. YOU KNOW HOW IT GOES.
GET BRECKED, PUNK!

RILEY! GET THAT PORTAL OPEN!
OOF!

NO ARMOR? NO WEAPONS? ARE YOU TRYING TO DIE?!
I'M A THIRD-STRIPE RED BELT! MY FISTS ARE MY WEAPONS!

I DO NOT WANT TO KILL YOU. BUT I'M NOT ABOVE-- HUH?
WHAT'S THIS?!

IMPOSSIBLE!
OR MORE APPROPRIATELY... IMPROBABLE!
CAN'T BE--!
OH, NO-- BRETT!!
TO BE CONTINUED IN
Portal Bound #3!

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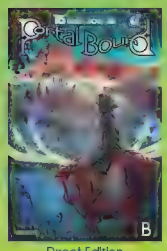
& Wes Hartman

# PORTAL BOUND

# "Riley Questionable Judgment"

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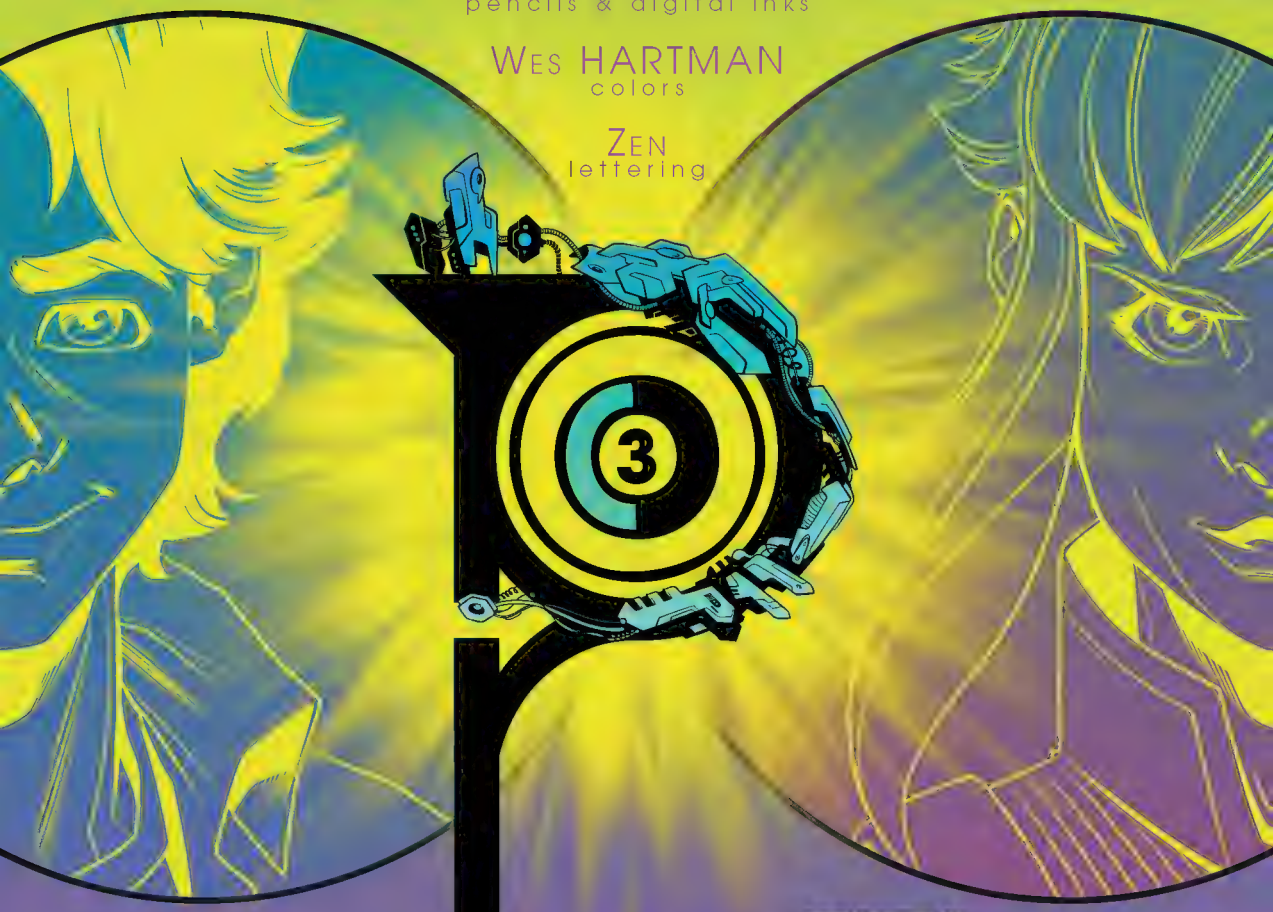
by Adam Archer

Mark ROSLAN & Gabe CARRASCO
story

Alex ARIZMENDI
& Marco Renna (pgs 9 10 13 14 17)
pencils & digital inks

Wes HARTMAN
colors

Zen
lettering

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PORTAL BOUND created by MARK ROSLAN & GABE CARRASCO
For Aspen: Founder: Michael Turner Co-Owner: Peter Steigerwald Co-Owner/President: Frank Mastromauro
Vice President/Editor in Chief: Vince Hernandez Vice President/Design and Production: Mark Rosian Editor: Gabe Carrasco
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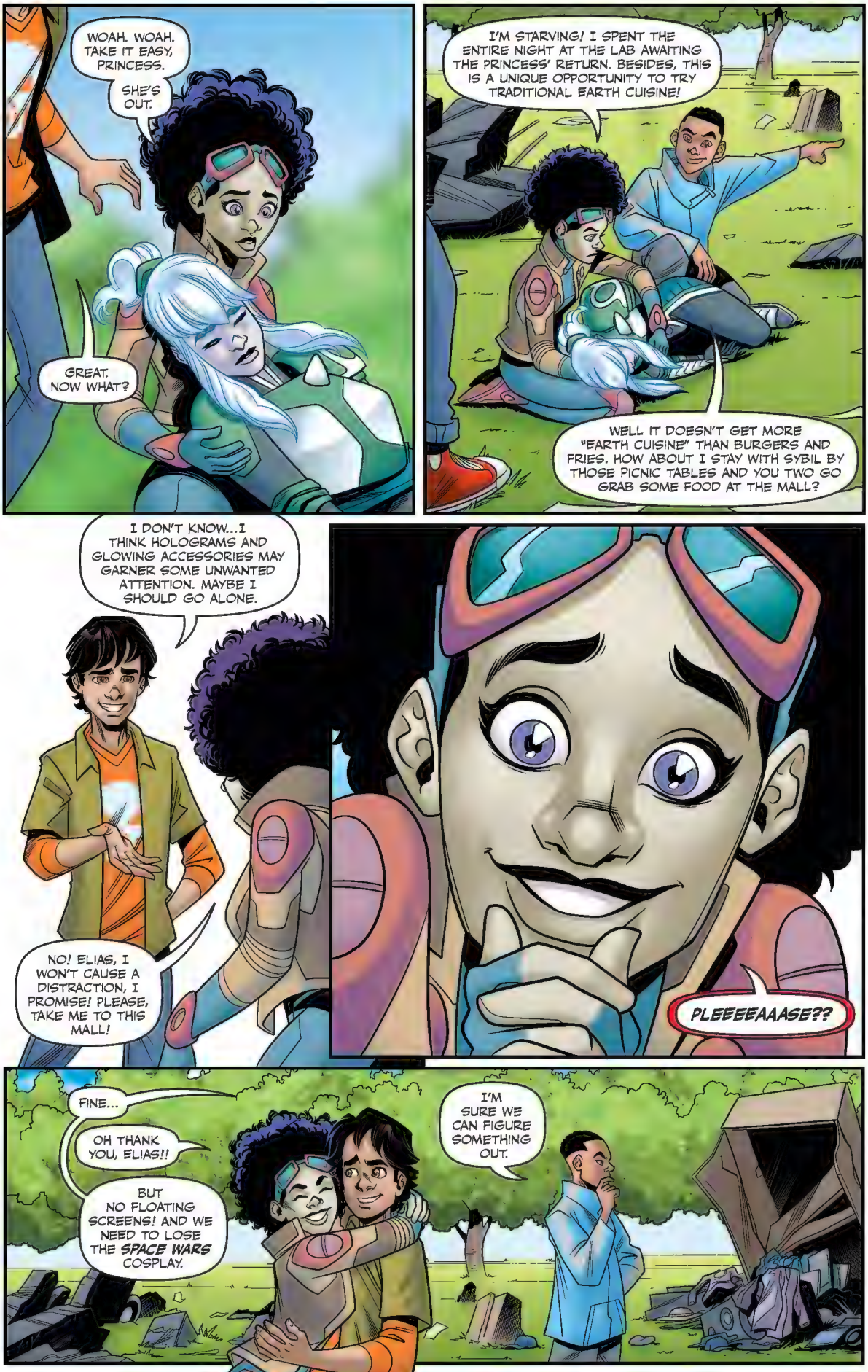
W-WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
THAT BOUNTY HUNTER IS GOING TO ABSORB MY BEST FRIEND!
RILEY! OPEN THAT PORTAL-- NOW!!
RIGHT!
FIGHT IT, BRETT!
ARGGH!!

HE ALMOST ATE ME!
I HAVE SYBIL! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
BRETT! COME ON, DUDE!
ELI-- BEHIND US!
GRRRR
KNOOMD
RILEY! CLOSE THE PORTAL! CLOSE THE PORTAL!

GGROARRR!
AHHH!!
GET DOWN!
SHHPHUNK
ARGRKK
WHOA-- RIGHT IN THE BRAIN! NICE!
DANG, I GOT WOLF-BIRD GUTS ON MY KICKS!

MAN! THAT WAS INTENSE!
OH, EARTH-- MWAAH, I MISSED YOU SO MUCH.
MY ALTERNATE...
...IS A CRAZY-COOL MERCENARY!
YEAH-- THAT'S TRYING TO KILL US. KEY WORD HERE IS "MERCENARY."
OH... YEAH. WELL, IF I KNOW ME, AND HE DOES KILL US, I BET IT'S IN AN ULTRA-COOL WAY.
IS SHE GOING TO BE ALRIGHT?
ASIDE FROM THE BRUISES AND SCRATCHES SHE--
I'M FINE. BETTER WARRIORS HAVE HIT ME HARDER. WHAT HURTS THE MOST IS BEING BACK HERE AGAIN ON THIS WEAKER VERSION OF HAVOC...


WOAH. WOAH. TAKE IT EASY, PRINCESS.
SHE'S OUT.
GREAT. NOW WHAT?
I'M STARVING! I SPENT THE ENTIRE NIGHT AT THE LAB AWAITING THE PRINCESS' RETURN. BESIDES, THIS IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TRADITIONAL EARTH CUISINE!
WELL IT DOESN'T GET MORE "EARTH CUISINE" THAN BURGERS AND FRIES. HOW ABOUT I STAY WITH SYBIL BY THOSE PICNIC TABLES AND YOU TWO GO GRAB SOME FOOD AT THE MALL?
I DON'T KNOW...I THINK HOLOGRAMS AND GLOWING ACCESSORIES MAY GARNER SOME UNWANTED ATTENTION. MAYBE I SHOULD GO ALONE.
NO! ELIAS, I WON'T CAUSE A DISTRACTION, I PROMISE! PLEASE, TAKE ME TO THIS MALL!
PLEEEEAAASE??
FINE...
OH THANK YOU, ELIAS!!
BUT NO FLOATING SCREENS! AND WE NEED TO LOSE THE SPACE WARS COSPLAY.
I'M SURE WE CAN FIGURE SOMETHING OUT.

NNGGH... WHAT DID THAT KID DO TO ME?
I FEEL EXHAUSTED AND INVIGORATED ALL AT ONCE.
THAT WAS PROBABLY THE SAME THING PRINCESS SYBIL DID WHEN SHE DESTROYED MY FYMIERA--
INCOMING COMMUNICATION FROM EMPEROR ATILUS
OH, NO. WHAT HAVE YOU GOTTEN YOURSELF INTO THIS TIME, OMEIL?
IF THEY FIND OUT I FAILED THE BOUNTY, ATILUS WILL HAVE MY HEAD.
INCOMING COMMUNICATION FROM EMPEROR ATILUS
FAILURE TO RESPOND WILL RESULT IN A WARRANT FOR EXECUTION
I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO VONT: NEVER TAKE A BOUNTY FROM THE CROWN. THE RISKS ALWAYS OUTWEIGH THE REWARD.
INCOMING COMMUNICATION FROM EMPEROR ATILUS
FAILURE TO RESPOND WILL RESULT IN WARRANT AND EXECUTION
BUT HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW THERE WAS A PORTAL TO ANOTHER WORLD, AND GIANT SUPER-WARRIORS?
I NEED TO GET BACK TO THE GUILD. VONT WILL KNOW WHAT TO DO.

EARTH
THAT WAS SO MUCH FUN! ALTHOUGH, WHY DON'T YOU SIMPLY RIDE THE ANIMALS? AREN'T THERE QUADRUPEDS BRED SPECIFICALLY FOR TRANSPORTATION?
YOU MEAN HORSES? ⩾PANT⩽ THAT'S NOT REALLY PRACTICAL.
I SCANNED YOUR LEG MUSCLES, ELIAS OF EARTH. PEDALING BOTH OF US ON YOUR BICYCLE IS FAR LESS PRACTICAL.
I... ⩾PANT⩽ I'M TOO TIRED TO ARGUE WITH THAT.
Wesley's
THIS IS PHENOMENAL! I'VE READ SO MUCH ABOUT EARTH, IT'S GREAT TO FINALLY SEE IT!
I'M SO GLAD PRINCESS SYBIL FOUND THE SOFTWARE TO RE-OPEN THE PORTAL AND RETRIEVE ME.
THE FILE DIRECTORY WAS PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD. I'M SURE SHE WOULD HAVE FOUND IT EVENTUALLY.
ARE YOU IMPLYING SHE DIDN'T?
OH YEAH, SHE HAD NO CLUE WHAT TO DO. BUT WHEN I GLANCED AT THE CODE IT LOOKED REALLY SIMILAR TO VIDEO GAME PROGRAMMING. ONCE I SPOTTED PORTAL_RESTITUTION.EXE I RAN IT.
ELIAS OF EARTH, I HAVE A DEEP APPRECIATION FOR ONE SO VERSED IN THE PRECISE LANGUAGE OF CODING. I'M PROUD TO HAVE YOU BY MY SIDE.
I...YEAH. ME TOO.
SHOOT-- MY MOM'S CALLING ME. I FORGOT TO CHECK IN.
DZZT
DZZT
HMM, THE PARENTAL DEPENDENCY PERIOD APPEARS REMARKABLY LONG ON EARTH.
IT CAN WAIT.
SAMPLE OUR ORANGE CHICKEN, MISS?
MOM

ORANGE CHICKEN? FASCINATING! ALTHOUGH, I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS. WHY IS THE CONTENT OF THIS FOOD ALMOST 40% ARTIFICIAL CHEMICALS?
RILEY!! UH-- SORRY ABOUT THAT, SHE DOESN'T GET OUT MUCH. THANK YOU!
HEY, WE AGREED ON NO SCREENS REMEMBER?

ELIAS, THAT MAN IS HANDING OUT POISON.
IT'S NOT POISON, RILEY. ON EARTH, WE JUST VALUE FLAVOR OVER OUR OWN HEALTH.
SEEMS RECKLESS AND SHORTSIGHTED.
WHICH REMINDS ME, ELIAS, IF WE ARE TO WORK TOGETHER, I FEEL THE NEED TO SAY YOU MADE THE WRONG DECISION BACK AT THE LAB.

PRINCESS SYBIL NEEDED YOU, AND ALTHOUGH SHE CAN BE CRASS, IT WAS FOR THE BEST INTEREST OF THE MISSION.
IT WAS A CLASS-1 FYMIERA WITH WING MODIFICATIONS. TERRIFYING, YES. BUT WITHOUT YOU, SYBIL DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE. AND TRUST ME, HER MORTALITY IS IN YOUR BEST INTEREST.
COME ON, DID YOU SEE THAT GUY? HE WAS RIDING A GIANT WOLF WITH WINGS!

SAMPLE OUR ICE CREAM, MISS?
*SIGH* MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. THAT WAS A LITTLE WEAK OF ME TO...WAIT-- HER MORTALITY? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

ELIAS!
THIS IS THE MOST DELICIOUS THING I'VE EVER HAD *IN MY LIFE!*

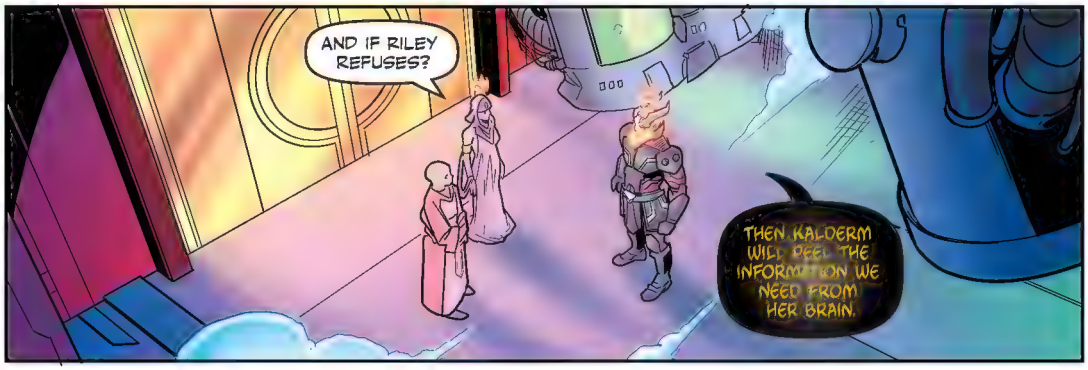
HAVOS
MY PATIENCE HAS GROWN THIN.
EARTH'S SUBJUGATION HAS WAITED LONG ENOUGH.
HAVOS THE GREATEST KINGDOM IN THE WORLD.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I THOUGHT WE WERE ALONE.
THE MERCENARIES WILL HAVE RILEY TO THE CASTLE SOON. ONLY ONE HAS TAKEN THE BOUNTY AND FAILED SO FAR.
VANORA WE WILL FIND YOUR ALTERNATE ON EARTH AND YOU WILL FINALLY FEEL AS I FEEL. SYBIL AS WELL.
AND IS THERE ANY WORD FROM OUR DAUGHTER?
SYBIL IS STRONG. SHE WILL RETURN TO US.
SHE TOO SHALL FEEL THE POWER ONCE SHE ABSORBS HER ALTERNATE. IT'S OUR FAMILY'S DESTINY TO LEAD THIS NEW POWERFUL FUSED WORLD.
W-WHAT BRINGS YOU AND THE QUEEN TO THE *FYMERIA-DECK*, EMPEROR ATILUS?

KALDERM, THE TIME HAS COME TO EXPEDITE THE PRODUCTION OF THE EYMIERA PROTOTYPES. I AUTHORIZE ALL VERSIONS BIO-ENGRAFTED AND GROWN TO ADULT BY MORNING.
OF COURSE, SIRE. IT WILL BE DONE.

PERFECT.
EARTH WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM.
KILLING HORUK WAS FOOLISH. HOW DO YOU PLAN TO MOVE SO MANY BEASTS--

HORUK MAY HAVE DEVELOPED PORTAL TECHNOLOGY, BUT IF RILEY HAS BROUGHT SYBIL TO EARTH, SHE DID NOT USE OUR ESTABLISHED RETURN PORT.
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? WITH HER TECH, SHE ARE NOT LIMITED BY LOCATION OR QUANTITY. RILEY IS THE KEY.

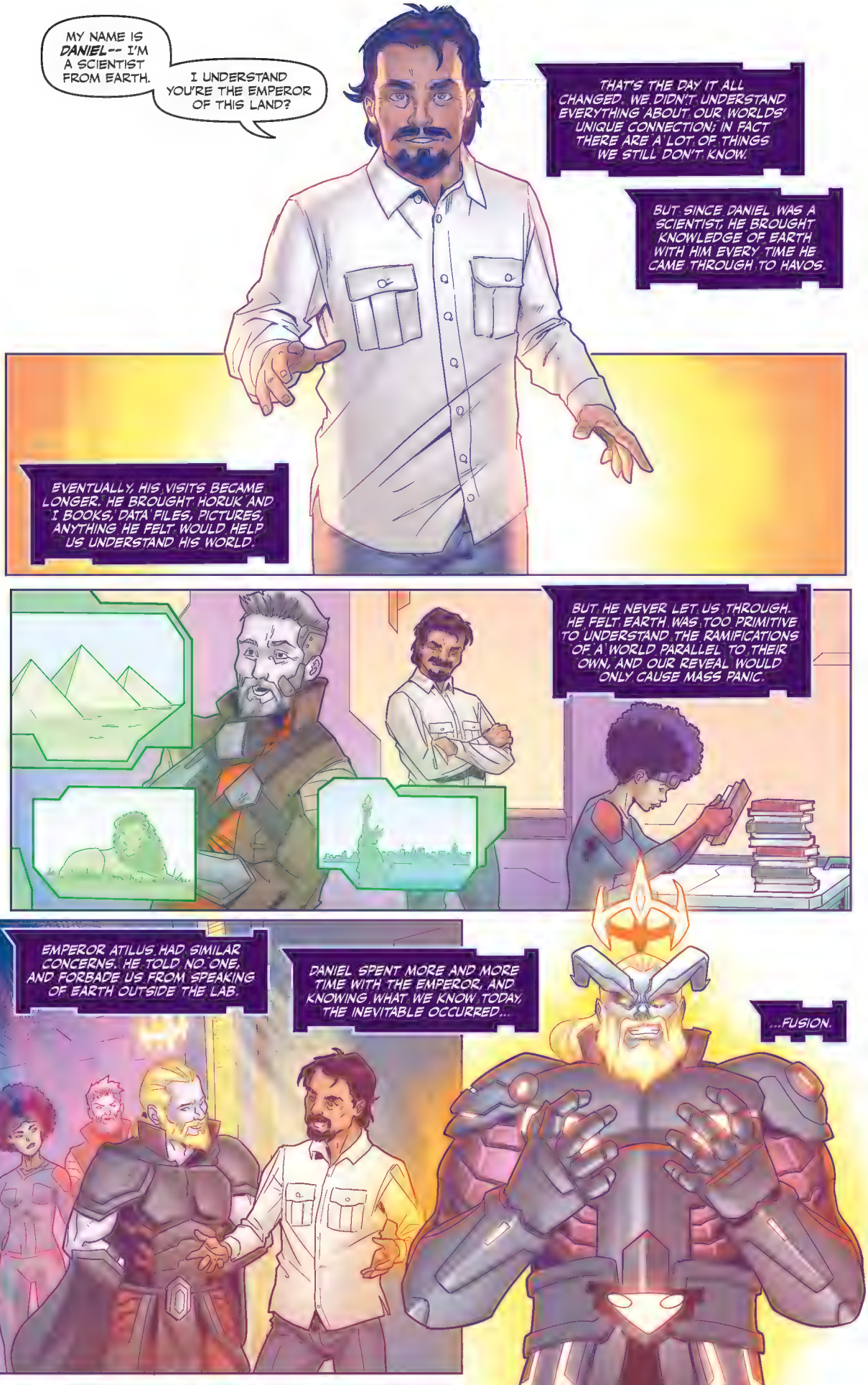
THE FIRST PORTAL BETWEEN OUR WORLDS WAS ONE SIMPLE DOORWAY. RILEY WILL MAKE IT SO WE HAVE AS MANY GATEWAYS AS WE DO SOLDIERS.
THE SKIES OF EARTH WILL RAIN WITH EYMIERA, EACH CAPTURING WEAK HUMANS AND BRINGING THEM HERE TO THEIR HAVOS COUNTERPARTS.


AND IF RILEY REFUSES?
THEN KALDERM WILL PEEL THE INFORMATION WE NEED FROM HER BRAIN.

WHAT'S TAKING THEM SO LONG? WE NEED TO PORTAL BACK TO THE CASTLE.
CHILL, MY HAVOS HOMIE. THEY'RE PROBABLY ON THEIR WAY HERE NOW.
FORGET IT. I'LL JUST GO TO THE CASTLE MYSELF AND--
YOU CAN'T HEAD BACK ALONE! YOU NEED ELI TO FORM, SYBELIUS!
SYBELIUS...?
YEAH! YOUR ULTIMATE WARRIOR FORM WITH THE ARM BLADES!
OOOOKAY. EVEN IF I NEEDED HELP, ELI REFUSES TO FIGHT WITH ME. HE'S NOT A WARRIOR, HE'S A LIABILITY, AND I WON'T HAVE HIM IMPEDING MY MISSION.
HEY!
YOU KNOW, I'M REALLY TIRED OF YOU CALLING ME A COWARD.
UH...WE'RE BACK! AND WE HAVE BURGERS AND FRIES!

I MIGHT NOT BE SOME PSYCHO WARRIOR LIKE YOU, BUT I LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE I'VE LEARNED TO USE MY BRAIN AND NOT MY FISTS!
I DON'T NEED YOUR BRAIN OR YOUR FISTS! IF YOU'D HAVE JUST FUSED WITH ME, OMEIL WOULDN'T HAVE STOOD A CHANCE!
DON'T YOU FEEL THE AMOUNT OF POWER WE HAVE TOGETHER? WITH YOU AT MY DISPOSAL, I CAN TAKE DOWN ENTIRE ARMIES!
PRINCESS SYBIL... THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO PREVENT.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, RILEY?
EMPEROR ATILUS DOESN'T WANT TO JUST DESTROY EARTH FOR SPORT. HE'S PLANNING TO COLLECT THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE AND USE THEM LIKE ARMOR. HE WANTS TO MAKE THE PEOPLE OF HAVOS INTO GODS.
HOLD UP. YOUR EMPEROR WANTS TO COLLECT EVERY HUMAN ON EARTH? HOW?
WITH PORTAL TECHNOLOGY...
...TECHNOLOGY DR. HORUK AND I HELPED DISCOVER.

HAVOC
HORUK'S LAB. BEFORE.
GOOD-- NOW ADJUST THE DAMPEN METERS.
I REMEMBER. TO 8.06.
PRECISELY. HE SHOULD BE HERE ANY MINUTE.
PERHAPS ONE DAY, YOU'LL TAKE MY PLACE, RILEY... AND I CAN FINALLY FINISH MY CABIN ON BETTEKER'S PEAK.
HORUK!
I THINK I'M GETTING THE HANG OF EVERYTHING NOW.
WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT YOU BECKON ME ALL THE WAY DOWN TO YOUR LABORATORY?
I MAY BE YOUR BROTHER, BUT I'M STILL THE EMPEROR. YOU CANNOT EXPECT ME TO SIMPLY DROP EVERYTHING I--
APOLOGIES, BROTHER, BUT WE HAVE MADE A REAL TANGIBLE BREAKTHROUGH ON THE TWIN-WORLD THEORY.
HORUK, YOU SHOULD BE WORKING ON OUR SHIELDS, NOT THIS NONSENSE HYPOTHESIS OF ALTERNATE REALITIES--
BLZZ
KKRRACKOOM!
IMPRESSIVE LIGHT SHOW. BUT, WE HAVE DONE THIS NUMEROUS TIMES. A FEW NUMBERS ON A SCREEN IS NOT PROOF OF--
MY EMPEROR! PLEASE, WAIT.
DR. HORUK WASN'T LYING. WE DO HAVE ACTUAL PROOF THIS TIME.
HELLO?


MY NAME IS DANIEL-- I'M A SCIENTIST FROM EARTH.
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE THE EMPEROR OF THIS LAND?
THAT'S THE DAY IT ALL CHANGED. WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING ABOUT OUR WORLDS' UNIQUE CONNECTION; IN FACT THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS WE STILL DON'T KNOW.
BUT SINCE DANIEL WAS A SCIENTIST, HE BROUGHT KNOWLEDGE OF EARTH WITH HIM EVERY TIME HE CAME THROUGH TO HAVOS.
EVENTUALLY, HIS VISITS BECAME LONGER. HE BROUGHT HORUK AND I BOOKS, DATA FILES, PICTURES, ANYTHING HE FELT WOULD HELP US UNDERSTAND HIS WORLD.
BUT HE NEVER LET US THROUGH. HE FELT EARTH WAS TOO PRIMITIVE TO UNDERSTAND THE RAMIFICATIONS OF A WORLD PARALLEL TO THEIR OWN, AND OUR REVEAL WOULD ONLY CAUSE MASS PANIC.
EMPEROR ATILUS HAD SIMILAR CONCERNS. HE TOLD NO ONE, AND FORBADE US FROM SPEAKING OF EARTH OUTSIDE THE LAB.
DANIEL SPENT MORE AND MORE TIME WITH THE EMPEROR, AND KNOWING WHAT WE KNOW TODAY, THE INEVITABLE OCCURRED...
...FUSION.

DANIEL...? AS IN--
MY FATHER VISITED YOU IN HAVOS?!
THE SCIENTIST IS YOUR FATHER? OF COURSE! THAT MAKES COMPLETE SENSE!
THEY'RE ALTERNATES. SO *YOUR* FATHER IS WHAT HAS DRIVEN *MY* FATHER INSANE.
BUT THAT'S... WAIT, THERE'S MORE YOU'RE NOT TELLING US, ISN'T THERE? RILEY, WHAT DID YOU MEAN EARLIER BY SYBIL'S MORTALITY BEING IN MY BEST INTEREST?
WELL, FROM OUR RESEARCH WE HAVE CONCLUDED EARTH AND HAVOS ARE *BOUND* SOLELY BY THREE PRINCIPLES: *LIFE, DEATH, AND LINEAGE.*
WE CALL THIS THE *PARALLEL MORTALITY THESIS,* WHICH IS TO SAY, IF YOU EXIST ON EARTH, YOU HAVE AN ALTERNATE ON HAVOS, AND VICE VERSA. IF YOU HAVE OFFSPRING, YOUR ALTERNATE WILL AS WELL. AND IF YOUR ALTERNATE DIES...
THEN I DIE TOO...?
WHOA.
DZZT
DZZT
I NEED A MINUTE.
HOLD UP. IF ALL THAT'S TRUE, ≥*GASP*≤ I WAS CHEERING YOU TWO ON WHEN YOU FOUGHT OMEIL! YOU COULDA KILLED ME!!
DZZT
DZZT
PRINCESS SYBIL WASN'T GOING TO KILL HIM! PROBABLY JUST CUT HIS ARMS OFF, RIGHT?

NO. I DEFINITELY WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM. SORRY, BRETT.
I ALMOST DIED TODAY!
GUYS!
M-MY UNCLE SUFFERED A HEART ATTACK.
HE'S DEAD.
OH, MAN. I'M SO SORRY, ELI. IF YOU NEED--
--WHICH UNCLE?
MY DAD'S ONLY BROTHER.
BUT THAT MEANS--
DR. HORUK...!
WE NEED TO GET TO HAVOS, NOW!!

VONT! I NEED HELP!
OMEIL! WHAT BRINGS YOU BACK TO THE GUILD LOOKING SO OUT OF SORTS?
TSAILEM! OH, YOU KNOW...BOUNTY HUNTER STUFF. BY CHANCE, HAVE YOU SEEN VONT?
AH YES, "BOUNTY HUNTER STUFF," OBVIOUSLY. SPEAKING OF WHICH, HERE'S SOME BOUNTY HUNTER ADVICE STRAIGHT FROM ME TO YOU...
DON'T HACK INTO MY WRIST COMM! AND DON'T STEAL MY BOUNTIES!
UMPHF!
I DIDN'T STEAL IT...I JUST COPIED THE INFORMATION. YOU COULD STILL GO AFTER THEM...
I COULD DO THAT, BUT LUCKY FOR ME, I DON'T HAVE TO.
LOOK AT THE NEWEST BOUNTY FROM THE OL' FLOATING CROWN.
NO, WAIT!
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, YOU EITHER SUCCEED, OR YOU DISAPPEAR.
VONT!
SORRY, KID. ITS JUST BUSINESS.

DR. HORUK...
RILEY, GET UP. IF ATILUS HAS KILLED HIS OWN BROTHER, WHAT WILL HE DO WHEN HE FINDS OUT MY MOTHER IS WHO HELPED US ESCAPE?
GIVE HER A SECOND, PRINCESS. SHE JUST LOST HER MENTOR.
AND I LOST MY UNCLE! AND I'M ABOUT TO LOSE MY MOTHER! AND ELI HIS MOTHER! WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO BE SAD AND CRY! WE ARE WARRIORS! WHY ARE YOU ALL SO WEAK?!
OONFF!
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE? YOU'RE DADDY'S SPOILED LITTLE PRINCESS THAT GOT TO PLAY SOLDIER ALL DAY AND THINKS SHE KNOWS PEOPLE, BUT YOU DON'T REALIZE THAT THEY'RE JUST FOLLOWING YOUR ORDERS.
WELL WE AREN'T ON HAVOS. I'M NOT YOUR SUBJECT. AND IF WE KEEP FIGHTING ALONGSIDE YOU, WE'LL ALL END UP LIKE YOUR UNCLE HORUK!

FINE.
SYBIL! WAIT!!
OUR RETURN PORTAL'S POWER IS EXTREMELY LOW! IT WASN'T BUILT FOR MULTIPLE USES!
THIS WILL BE ITS *FINAL* USE.
HORUK ONCE TOLD ME, "*GREAT WARRIORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVING LIVES WHENEVER CAPABLE.*" AND I'M MORE THAN CAPABLE OF SAVING MY MOTHER.
YOU ALL WANT TO SIT HERE AND CRY LIKE FRAGILE CHILDREN? THEN STAY ON THIS WEAK PLANET AND LEAVE THIS TO ME.
SYBIL, WE CAN HELP. WE JUST NEED A PLAN--
I DON'T NEED YOU.
I DON'T NEED *ANY* OF YOU!

GRRAAAAHHH!!
SMASH
SKRASH
KRASHH
NO. NO. NO!
SHE WOULDN'T!
FAIL FAIL FAIL
ERROR
X
FAIL
ERROR
IF SYBIL DESTROYED THE PORTAL MACHINERY ON THE OTHER SIDE...
...YOU'RE STUCK HERE ON EARTH!
TO BE CONTINUED IN
Portal Bound #4!

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& Wes Hartman

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by -Adam Archer

# PORTAL BOUND

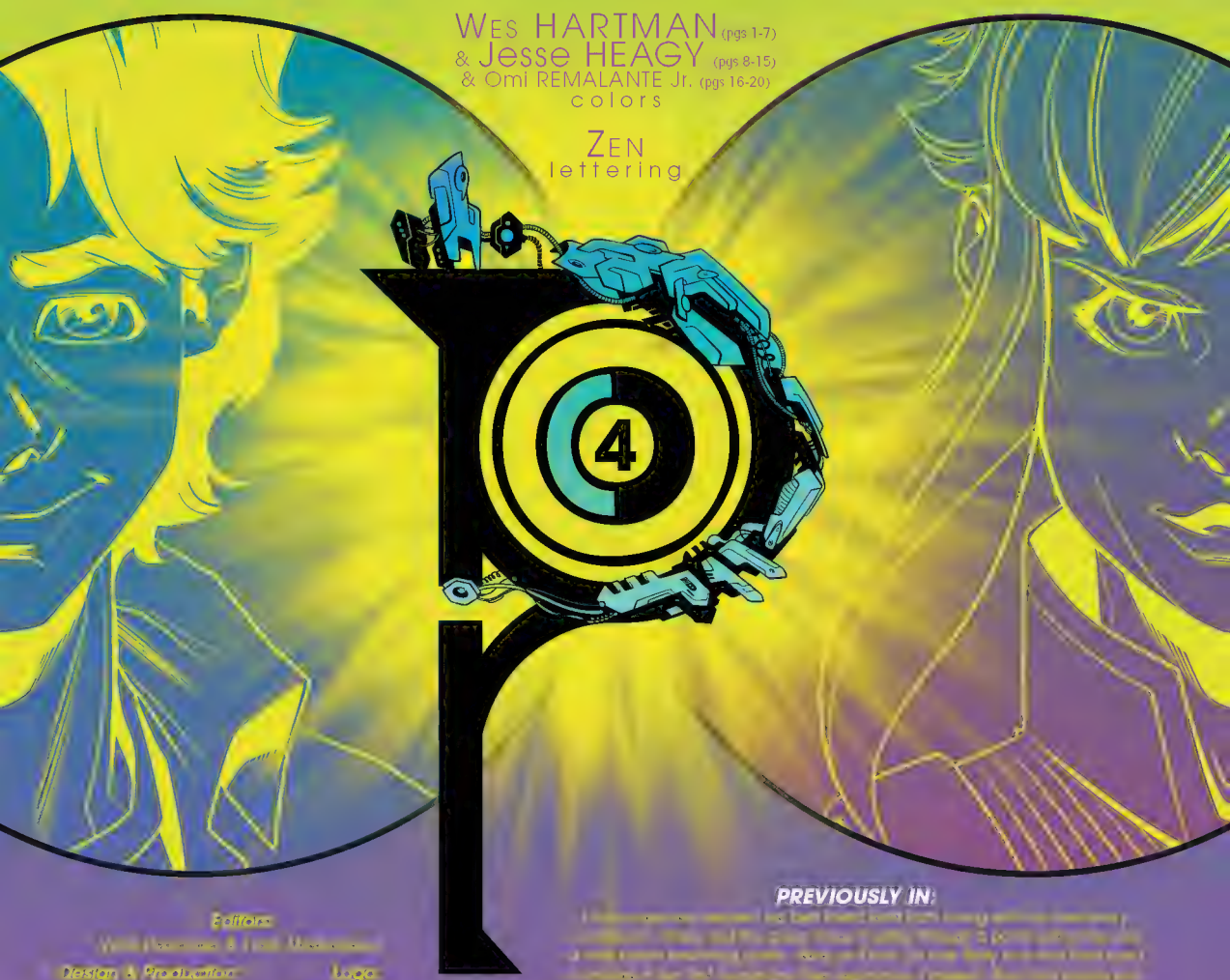
# "Brett-Con Delta"

Mark ROSLAN & Gabe CARRASCO
story

Alex ARIZMENDI
& Marco RENNA (pgs 1 2 8 11 14 16)
pencils & digital inks

Wes HARTMAN (pgs 1-7)
& Jesse HEAGY (pgs 8-15)
& Omi REMALANTE Jr. (pgs 16-20)
colors

Zen
lettering

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Design & Production:

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**PREVIOUSLY IN:**

PORTAL BOUND created by MARK ROSLAN & GABE CARRASCO
For Aspen: Founder: Michael Turner Co-Owner: Peter Steigerwald Co-Owner/President: Frank Mastromauro
Vice President/Editor in Chief: Vince Hernandez Vice President/Design and Production: Mark Rosian Editor: Gabe Carrasco
Marketing Assistant: Corinne Chuah Production Assistant: Justin Vancho Office Manager: Megan Shirk AspenStore.com: Chris Rupp

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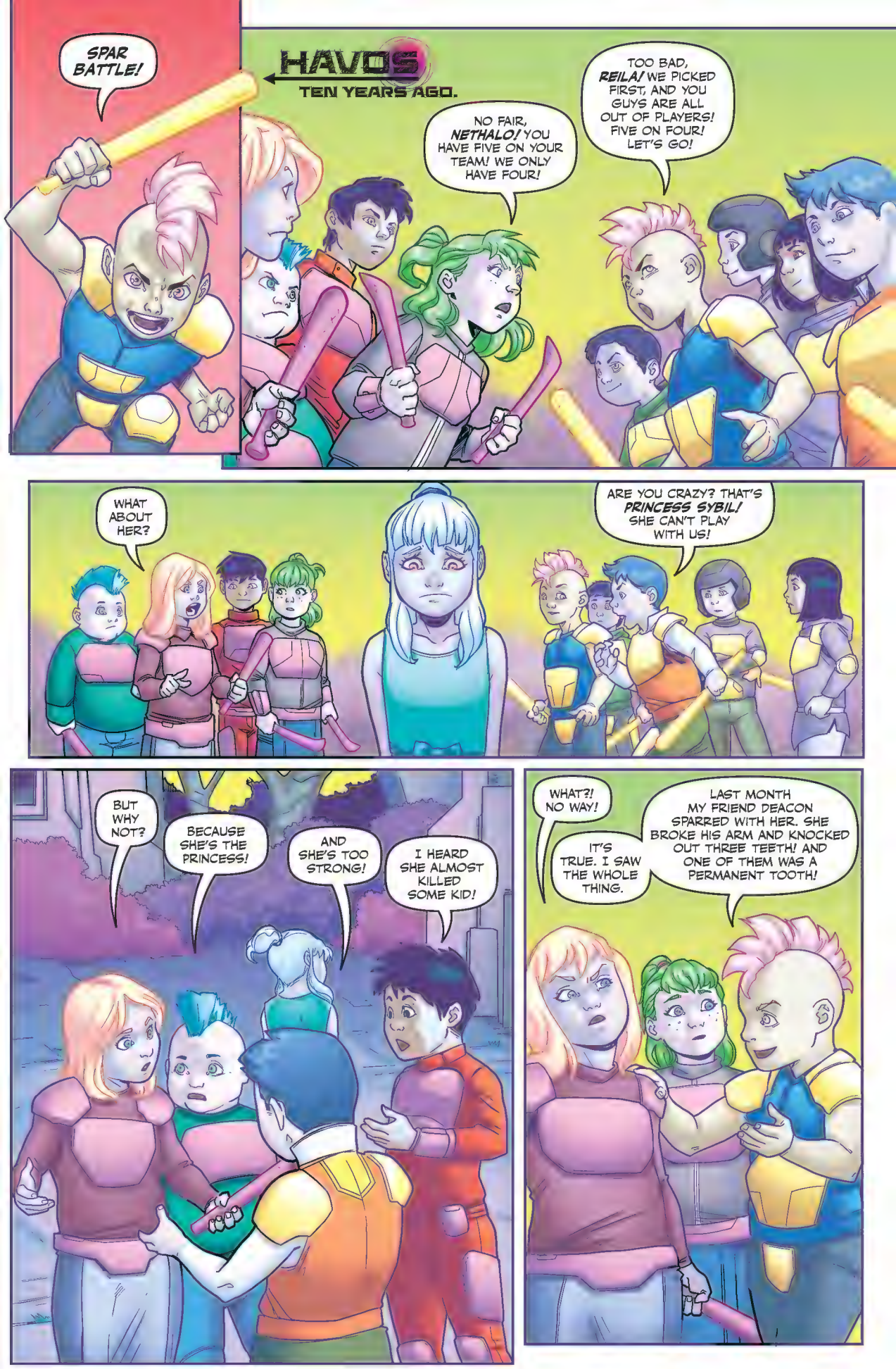
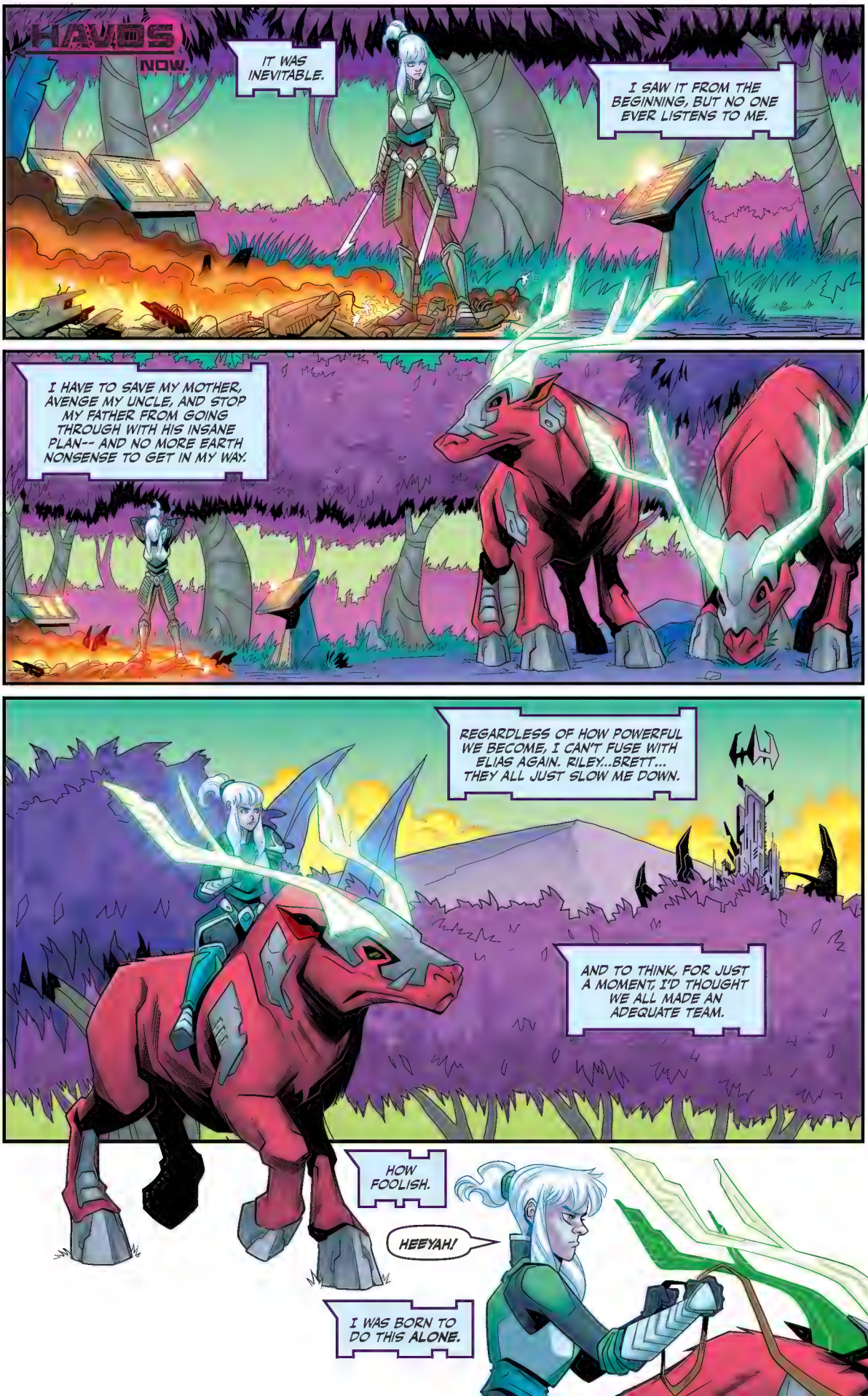
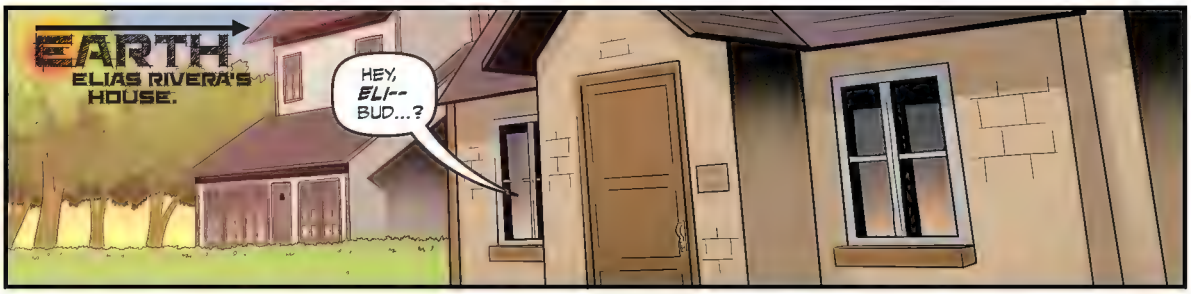

SPAR BATTLE!
HAVOC
TEN YEARS AGO.
NO FAIR, NETHALO! YOU HAVE FIVE ON YOUR TEAM! WE ONLY HAVE FOUR!
TOO BAD, REILA! WE PICKED FIRST, AND YOU GUYS ARE ALL OUT OF PLAYERS! FIVE ON FOUR! LET'S GO!
WHAT ABOUT HER?
ARE YOU CRAZY? THAT'S PRINCESS SYBIL! SHE CAN'T PLAY WITH US!
BUT WHY NOT?
BECAUSE SHE'S THE PRINCESS!
AND SHE'S TOO STRONG!
I HEARD SHE ALMOST KILLED SOME KID!
WHAT?! NO WAY!
IT'S TRUE. I SAW THE WHOLE THING.
LAST MONTH MY FRIEND DEACON SPARRED WITH HER. SHE BROKE HIS ARM AND KNOCKED OUT THREE TEETH! AND ONE OF THEM WAS A PERMANENT TOOTH!

BUT, SHE LOOKS SO LONELY...
SYBIL!
DID YOU HAVE A GOOD DAY AT SCHOOL?
IT WAS FINE. LET'S JUST GET TO TRAINING. FATHER GETS MAD WHEN I'M LATE.
YOU'VE BEEN TRAINING HARD EVERY SINGLE DAY. WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GO INTO TOWN AND GET SOME FROZEN PERIFRUIT? IT WILL BE OUR LITTLE SECRET.
BUT TODAY WE'RE GONNA USE REAL SWORDS.
≥SIGH≤ IF YOU'D LIKE, WE CAN EVEN INVITE ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS. MY TREAT.
I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS.
SYBIL, THIS IS WHY I INSISTED YOU GO HERE. YOU NEED TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE PEOPLE OF HAVOS. THEY WILL BE YOUR ALLIES, AND ONE DAY THEY WILL BE YOUR SUBJECTS.
BUT IF I TRAIN, I'LL BE STRONG LIKE FATHER. THEN, I WON'T NEED FRIENDS, ALLIES, OR SUBJECTS...
...I WON'T NEED ANYONE.

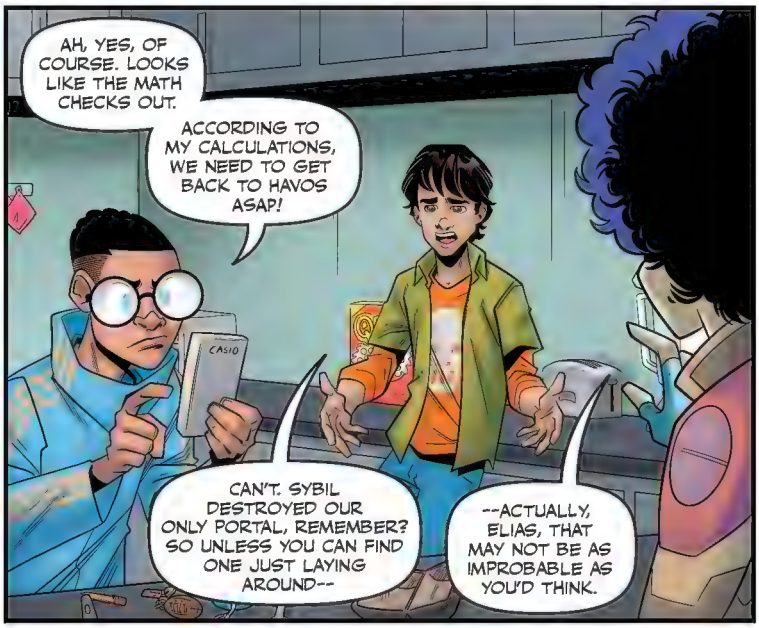

HAVOS NOW.
IT WAS INEVITABLE.
I SAW IT FROM THE BEGINNING, BUT NO ONE EVER LISTENS TO ME.
I HAVE TO SAVE MY MOTHER, AVENGE MY UNCLE, AND STOP MY FATHER FROM GOING THROUGH WITH HIS INSANE PLAN-- AND NO MORE EARTH NONSENSE TO GET IN MY WAY.
REGARDLESS OF HOW POWERFUL WE BECOME, I CAN'T FUSE WITH ELIAS AGAIN. RILEY...BRETT... THEY ALL JUST SLOW ME DOWN.
AND TO THINK, FOR JUST A MOMENT, I'D THOUGHT WE ALL MADE AN ADEQUATE TEAM.
HOW FOOLISH.
HEEYAH!
I WAS BORN TO DO THIS ALONE.


EARTH
ELIAS RIVERA'S HOUSE.
HEY, ELI-- BUD...?

SO SORRY, DUDE. FIRST YOUR DAD, AND NOW YOUR UNCLE.
THANKS, BRETT-- BUT MY DAD'S NOT DEAD...HE GOT ABSORBED BY HIS ALTERNATE SELF ON ANOTHER EARTH, AND IS NOW A WARMONGERING EMPEROR BENT ON WIPING OUT HUMANITY FOR HIS NEW PLANET'S BENEFIT.
YEAH... ≥SIGH≤ HAPPENS TO THE BEST OF US.

NOW, SYBIL IS OVER IN HAVOS TAKING HIM ON ALONE. SHE'S GONNA GET HERSELF KILLED WITHOUT US! WHICH IS GOING TO GET ME KILLED! THIS WHOLE MORTALITY HYPOTHESIS-- UGH! MY FATE IS BOUND TO A PSYCHOPATH!
YO, RILEY, YOU'RE SAYING IF OUR ALTERNATE DIES, THEN WE DIE, RIGHT? BUT IF THAT'S TRUE, WHY AREN'T THERE RANDO-DEATHS HAPPENING ALL OVER THE PLACE?

THE UNIVERSE BALANCES ITSELF OUT. WARS THAT KILL THOUSANDS ON HAVOS MIGHT APPEAR AS, SAY, A PLAGUE ON EARTH. ACCIDENTS THERE CAN BE HEART ATTACKS OVER HERE. VARIOUS EQUIVALENCIES.


AH, YES, OF COURSE. LOOKS LIKE THE MATH CHECKS OUT.
ACCORDING TO MY CALCULATIONS, WE NEED TO GET BACK TO HAVOS ASAP!
CASIO
CAN'T. SYBIL DESTROYED OUR ONLY PORTAL, REMEMBER? SO UNLESS YOU CAN FIND ONE JUST LAYING AROUND--
--ACTUALLY, ELIAS, THAT MAY NOT BE AS IMPROBABLE AS YOU'D THINK.

LETS HOPE YOUR MOM'S SPARE KEYS WORK.
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, RILEY? I'VE NEVER BEEN ALLOWED IN MY DAD'S STUDY, NOT EVEN WHEN HE BAILED ON ME AND MY MOM. IT'S BEEN LOCKED FOR YEARS...
I'M GETTING FAINT READINGS OF HAVOS TECHNOLOGY COMING FROM THIS ROOM. IF MY THEORY IS CORRECT, THIS COULD BE OUR ONLY CHANCE TO GET TO SYBIL!
NO. WAY.
THESE COMPUTERS AND CONSTRUCTS--
--MUST BE THE PORTAL MY DAD BUILT WHEN HE FIRST DISCOVERED HAVOS! A FREAKIN' PORTAL HAS BEEN IN MY HOUSE THIS ENTIRE TIME!
THE BASE FRAMEWORK OF THE GATEWAY CODE IS ALL HERE! AND FULLY CHARGED! I JUST NEED TO ADJUST SOME THINGS AND HOPE THE POWER HOLDS UP.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS?!
YOU CAN GET US TO HAVOS?
I CAN GET US ANYWHERE.

IT LOOKS LIKE THE SCIENTISTS HAVE GOTTEN PRETTY CARELESS WITH THE FYMIERA DESIGNS. THEY DEFINITELY WENT QUANTITY OVER QUALITY.

ARRSCCHH!

THERE'S NO WAY HORUK HAD ANY PART IN THESE ABOMINATIONS. THEY'RE NOWHERE NEAR AS TOUGH AS THE-- WHAT DID ELI CALL THEM? MECHANICAL LIONS?

...BUT I HAVE TO GET TO MY MOTHER!

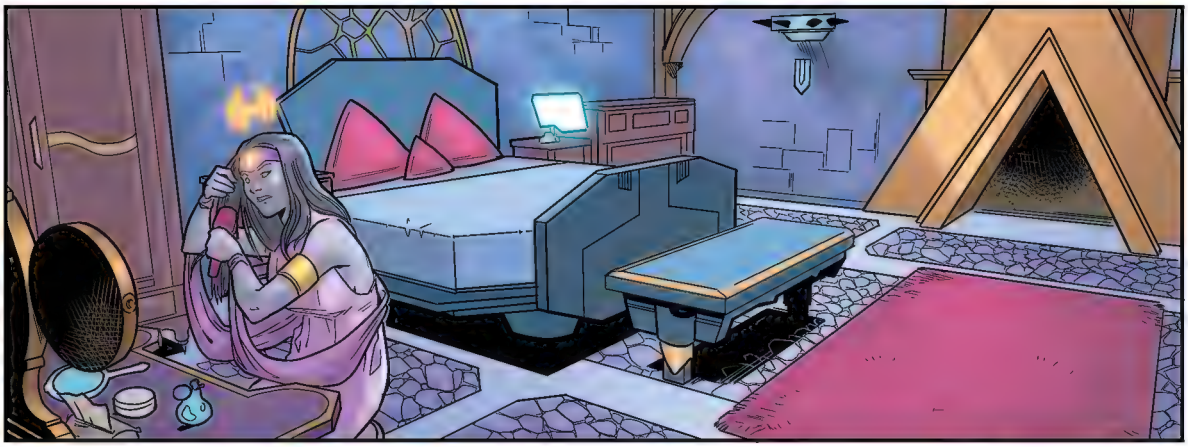
HyaAA!!

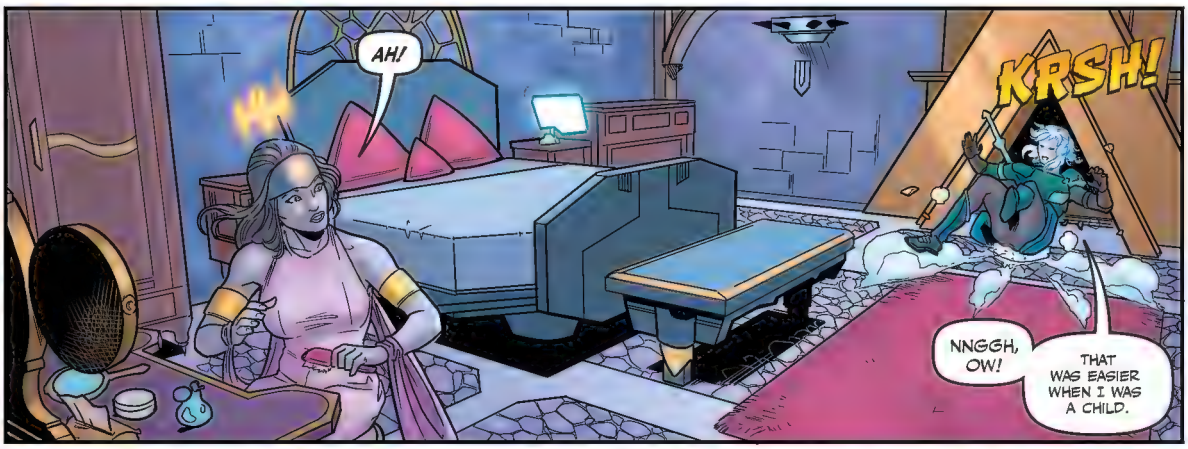
IT'S EVENING; SHE'LL LIKELY BE IN HER ROOM. NO DOUBT HER HALLWAY WOULD BE HEAVILY GUARDED. LUCKILY, I KNOW ANOTHER WAY.

AW, **GAMUT**. THEY HAVE GUARDS ON EVERY DOOR, BALCONY AND WINDOW. I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT ANY OF OUR OWN SOLDIERS...

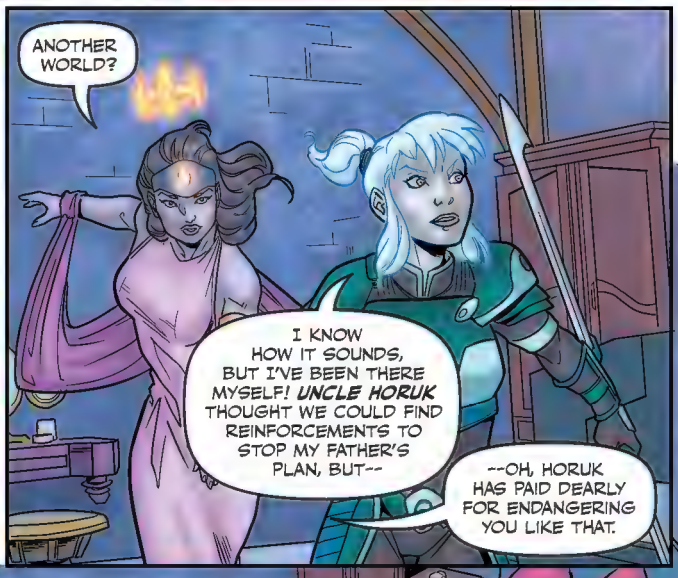
I WAS BORN IN THIS CASTLE. I KNOW EVERY CRACK IN EVERY STONE IN EVERY ROOM. EVERY SECRET THESE WALLS KEEP, ARE MINE ALONE.

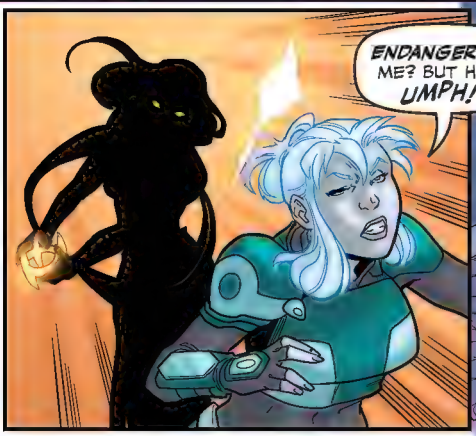
DON'T WORRY, MOM. I'M ON MY WAY.

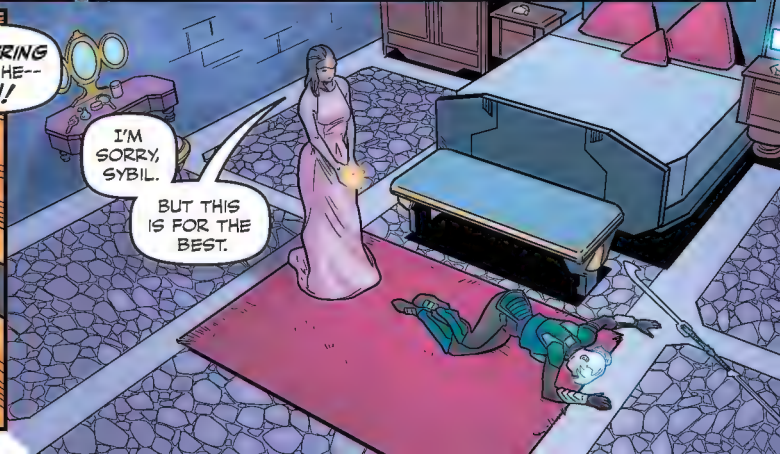


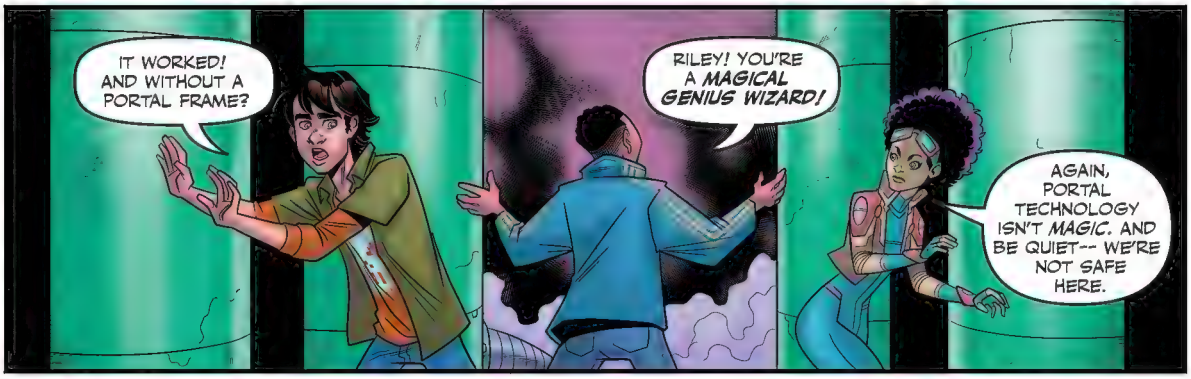

AH!
KRSH!
NNGGH, OW!
THAT WAS EASIER WHEN I WAS A CHILD.

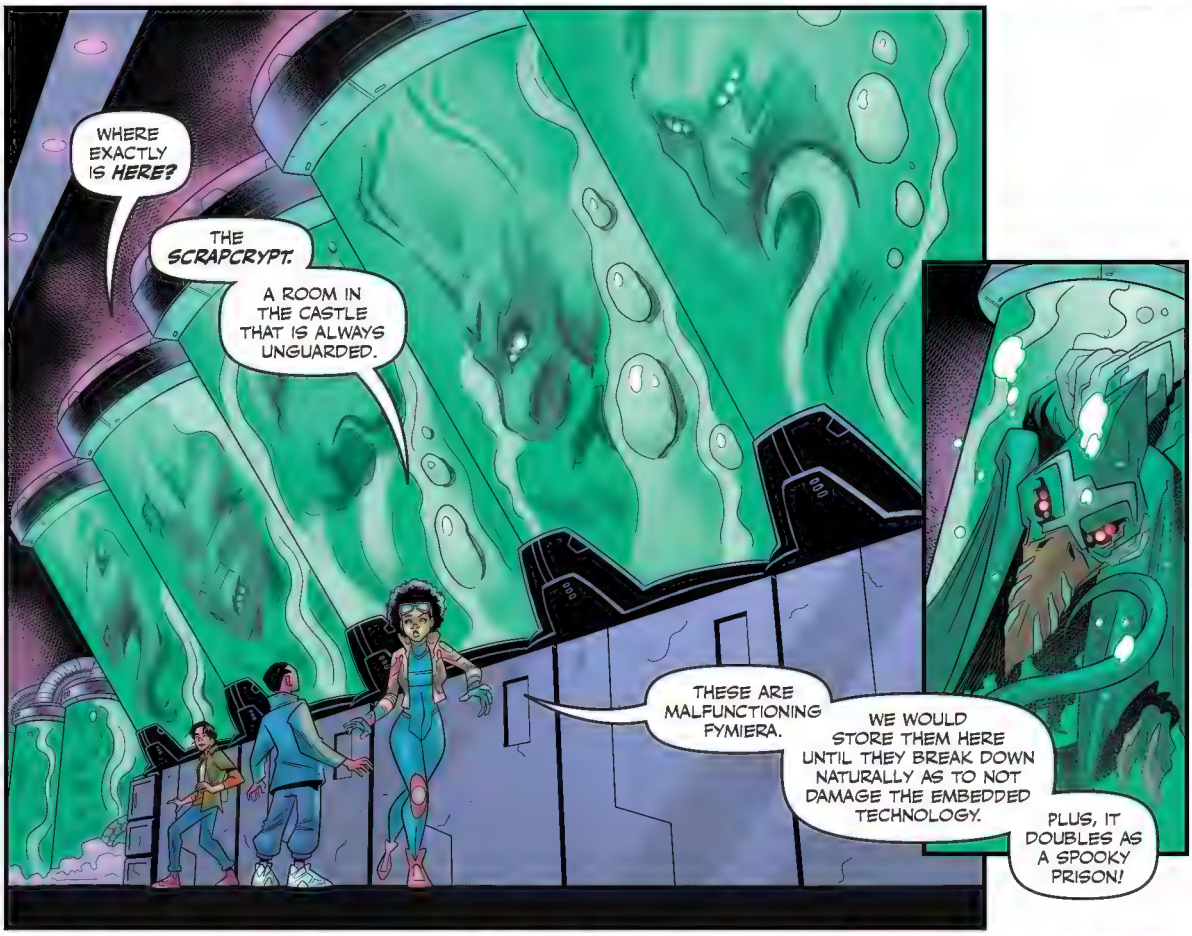
SYBIL, MY HEART!
I WAS SO WORRIED. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
MOM! I UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING NOW. FATHER IS FUSED WITH HIS ALTERNATE SELF FROM ANOTHER WORLD AND IT'S DRIVEN HIM MAD!


ANOTHER WORLD?
I KNOW HOW IT SOUNDS, BUT I'VE BEEN THERE MYSELF! UNCLE HORUK THOUGHT WE COULD FIND REINFORCEMENTS TO STOP MY FATHER'S PLAN, BUT--
--OH, HORUK HAS PAID DEARLY FOR ENDANGERING YOU LIKE THAT.

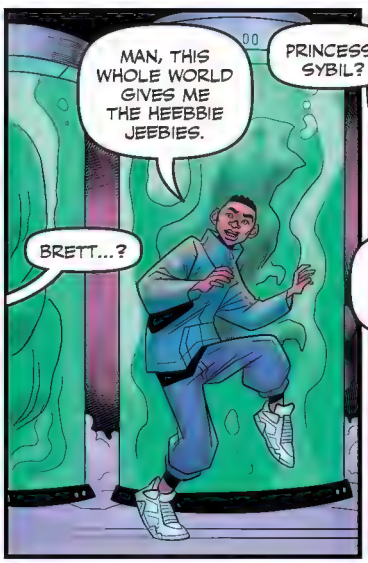

ENDANGERING ME? BUT HE-- UMPH!

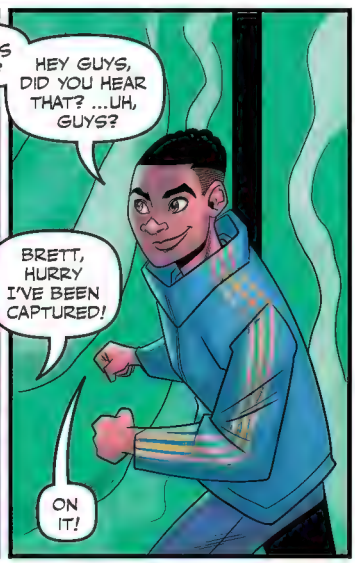

I'M SORRY, SYBIL.
BUT THIS IS FOR THE BEST.


IT WORKED! AND WITHOUT A PORTAL FRAME?
RILEY! YOU'RE A *MAGICAL GENIUS WIZARD!*
AGAIN, PORTAL TECHNOLOGY ISN'T *MAGIC.* AND BE QUIET-- WE'RE NOT SAFE HERE.


WHERE EXACTLY IS *HERE?*
THE *SCRAPCRYPT.*
A ROOM IN THE CASTLE THAT IS ALWAYS UNGUARDED.
THESE ARE MALFUNCTIONING FYMIERA.
WE WOULD STORE THEM HERE UNTIL THEY BREAK DOWN NATURALLY AS TO NOT DAMAGE THE EMBEDDED TECHNOLOGY.
PLUS, IT DOUBLES AS A SPOOKY PRISON!

YOU COULD TAKE US ANYWHERE AND YOU BROUGHT US INTO A LITERAL NIGHTMARE?
ALTHOUGH IT'S A BIT SCARY, THEY WON'T HARM US SO LONG AS WE DON'T ANTAGONIZE THEM.


MAN, THIS WHOLE WORLD GIVES ME THE HEEBBIE JEEBIES.
BRETT...?


PRINCESS SYBIL?
HEY GUYS, DID YOU HEAR THAT? ...UH, GUYS?
BRETT, HURRY I'VE BEEN CAPTURED!
ON IT!

YOU'RE SURPRISINGLY CALM, ELIAS. I THOUGHT YOU'D BE MUCH MORE ANXIOUS.
IT'S SO STRANGE. I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE...AND I WASN'T SCARED THEN, SO I'M NOT SCARED NOW.
LIKE A MEMORY OF SORTS?
YEAH! DO YOU THINK IT'S ONE OF SYBIL'S MEMORIES? YOU KNOW, CAUSED BY OUR FUSION?
I'M NOT SURE! BUT THAT IS A COMPELLING HYPOTHESIS.
ELI! RILEY! HELP!!
OMEIL!
THAT BOUNTY HUNTER'S HERE?!
HEH. NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SCIENTIST.
I'M READY TO COLLECT MY BOUNTY.

OH, MY PRINCESS. HOW'S YOUR HEAD?
I'M SO SORRY I HAD TO DO THAT, BUT I JUST CAN'T HAVE YOU RUNNING OFF AND STABBING GUARDS, OR DESTROYING EXPENSIVE FYMIERA. I'M JUST TRYING TO KEEP YOU SAFE.
BUT...WE HAVE TO STOP DAD. HE'S---
---EVIL? WHY? BECAUSE OF SOME CRAZY STORY PUT INTO YOUR HEAD BY YOUR UNCLE AND HIS LACKEY? DID YOU EVER THINK FOR A MOMENT THAT MAYBE ***HORUK*** WAS THE VILLAIN?
...
NO. I'VE BEEN TO EARTH. HORUK WANTED US TO SAVE THEM.
SAVE THEM FROM WHAT? OUR WORLDS' INEVITABLE FUSION? YET HE DEMANDED YOU FUSE WITH YOUR OWN ALTERNATE TO SERVE HIS OWN INTENTIONS... ***THE HYPOCRACY.***
ELI HELPED ME SAVE THE HUMANS AT THE CONCERT.
SYBIL, NO ONE ATTACKED THE HUMANS. ***GENERAL GUNNAR*** WAS ONLY THERE TO ARREST HORUK AND BRING YOU HOME SAFELY. HE WAS TOLD NOT TO ATTACK YOU, AND NOW, EVEN ***HE*** IS MISSING AND PRESUMED DEAD.
BUT-- NO WAIT, THAT'S NOT HOW IT HAPPENED! RIGHT? HE ATTACKED US... DIDN'T HE?
SYBIL, MY HEART, I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU.
YOUR FATHER AND I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH, BUT AS EMPEROR AND QUEEN, WE MUST DO WHAT'S BEST FOR OUR PEOPLE. WE MUST DEFEND OURSELVES FROM THESE ANTAGONISTIC WORLDS.
MOTHER, NO! EARTH IS NOT OUR ENEMY!
EARTH? OH, SYBIL...
...IT LOOKS LIKE HORUK DIDN'T TELL YOU ***EVERYTHING.***

COME NOW, SCIENTIST! EMPEROR ATILUS HAS CALLED FOR YOUR CAPTURE!
NO THANK YOU! ATILUS AND I AREN'T REALLY ON SPEAKING TERMS AT THE MOMENT!
IT WAS NOT A REQUEST.
THWAM!
ELIAS, DID YOU HAVE ANY DEGREE OF CONTROL WHEN FUSED WITH SYBIL?
I WAS ABLE TO NUDGE OUR ARM A LITTLE.
NOT THE RESPONSE I HAD HOPED FOR.
STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS, SCIENTIST. YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THIS TIME!
SORRY ABOUT THIS, BRETT!
RRAAAUGHH!
ELIAS, STAND RIGHT HERE AND STRIKE AT MY SIGNAL.
YOU WANT ME TO HIT HIM WITH A BIG METAL STICK?!
JUST TRUST ME!
BLAT
ENOUGH OF THIS!

BRETT, BUDDY? YOU IN THERE?
DON'T UH... DON'T MAKE ME USE THIS... PLEASE?
TELL ME WHERE SHE IS BEFORE I KILL YOU, COWARD.
FWIP
ELI! NOW!
THWACK!
AAUUGH!!
FYMIERA-GOO! RILEY, THAT WAS GENIUS!
YOU NEED TO FIND SYBIL. THIS SUBSTANCE WON'T HOLD HIM FOR LONG, AND HE ONLY WANTS ME.
WHAT? NO! I'M NOT LEAVING YOU HERE...!
I'LL BE FINE, I PROMISE.
BUT--!
ELIAS, PLEASE, IT'S UP TO YOU NOW.
GO SAVE OUR WORLDS.

YOUR FYMIERA ARMY IS NEARLY COMPLETE, SIRE. ONLY A FEW SPECIES REMAIN TO GROW TO MATURITY.
EXCELLENT. KALDERM AND THE FYMIERA-DECK?
EARTH'S GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION HAS BEEN DOWNLOADED INTO THEIR HARD DRIVES...
"...THEY ALL KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO ONCE THEY ARE TRANSPORTED TO EARTH. WE HAVE LITERALLY THOUSANDS OF PORTAL FRAMES CONNECTED TO EACH SPAWNING CAGE."
ATILUS, MY LOVE.
AH, VANORA YOU ARE NOTABLY SERENE. ANY WORD OF SYBIL?
YES. A BOUNTY HUNTER HAS FOUND HER, AND SHE WILL BE RETURNED HOME TO US SHORTLY. OUR DAUGHTER WILL BE SAFE AT LAST.
PERHAPS WE SHOULD WAIT SO OUR DAUGHTER CAN WITNESS THE DAWN OF OUR NEW WORLD WITH US.
NO, SHE HAS BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH THIS PAST DAY. LET HER REST.
OF COURSE. AND WHAT OF RILEY? SHE IS CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR MISSION.
MY EMPEROR.
I HAVE THE SCIENTIST AND AM HERE TO COLLECT THE REWARD.

EMPEROR ATILUS, PLEASE. YOU CAN'T DO THIS--
GET TO THE CONTROLS. YOU HAVE ONE OPPORTUNITY TO COMPLY.
NEVER. YOU CAN'T MOVE THIS MANY FYMIERA THROUGH ONE PORTAL FRAME.
GET THIS TRAITOR TO THE CONTROL PANEL.
YOU HAVE DONE HAVOS PROUD, BOUNTY HUNTER. AH, IT SEEMS YOU HAVE ABSORBED YOUR ALTERNATE FROM EARTH?
YES, MY KING. IT IS LIKE NOTHING I HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED.
THE POWER YOU FEEL IS THE GIFT I SEEK TO BRING TO OUR ENTIRE WORLD.
IT'S NOT YOUR POWER TO GIVE, YOU MONSTER! I WILL NEVER HELP YOU ACHIEVE YOUR SICK GOALS!
KALDERM, BEGIN THE NEURAL HACK.
BUT... THAT MIGHT KILL ME.
YES, MY EMPEROR.
NO! NO-- WAIT! NO NO NOOOOOO--
NOOOO!!!

IT'S FUNNY. JUST LAST WEEK I WAS SITTING IN CLASS, DAYDREAMING ABOUT BEING ANYWHERE ELSE THAN BORING OLD SCHOOL. BEING ANYONE ELSE OTHER THAN BORING OLD ME.
NOW, I WOULD LOVE TO BE SITTING IN MRS. IRVIN'S CLASS, DYING OF BOREDOM, INSTEAD OF HERE IN THIS CASTLE DYING FROM WHO-KNOWS-WHAT.
RILEY SAYS IT'S UP TO ME? I CAN'T REALLY BE THE ONE TO SAVE EARTH FROM... CONSUMPTION-- CAN I?
I'M JUST A TEENAGER. A NORMAL, FORGETTABLE KID FROM THE MIDDLE OF VIRGINIA. I SHOULD BE PLAYING VIDEO GAMES WITH BRETT, NOT SAVING THE WORLD.
I CAN'T STOP AN EMPEROR. I CAN BARELY MAKE A SANDWICH.
MY FRIENDS ARE PROBABLY ALL CAPTURED. I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE TO FIND SYBIL. AND EVEN IF I DID, DO WE REALLY STAND A FIGHTING CHANCE AGAINST OUR DADS?
I CAN'T KILL MY DAD, CAN I?
SYBIL WAS RIGHT. I REALLY AM A COWARD.

MY BROTHER, HORUK, NOT ONLY BETRAYED ME, BUT HIS PEOPLE– HIS ENTIRE WORLD.
HOWEVER, YOU CAN CORRECT HIS TRANSGRESSIONS. YOU ARE ABLE TO CREATE PORTALS WITHOUT THE RESTRICTION OF A PORTAL FRAME, IS THIS CORRECT?
YES, MY EMPEROR.
THEN IT SEEMS WE ARE READY TO BEGIN.
WITH ALL THE POWER OF HAVOS AT YOUR DISPOSAL, READY THE MAIN PORTAL!
YES, MY EMPEROR.
OUR WORLDS ARE BOUND TO ONE ANOTHER!
PREPARE THE FYMIEZ FOR SIMULTANEOUS TRANSPORT!
WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

ACTIVATE ALL PORTALS. AND RELEASE THE FYMIERA.
YES, MY EMPEROR.
RELEASE THEM ALL! EARTH MUST NOT BE WARNED!
HISTORY WILL RECORD THAT I AM THE ONE THAT BROUGHT HAVOC TO ENLIGHTENMENT.
GO, MY FYMIERA! BRING THE STRONGEST ALTERNATES TO US!

EARTH

LET THE EVOLUTION OF HAVOC BEGIN.

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Direct Edition
by -Alex Arizmendi
& Wes Hartman

# PORTAL BOUND

## "Sybil War"

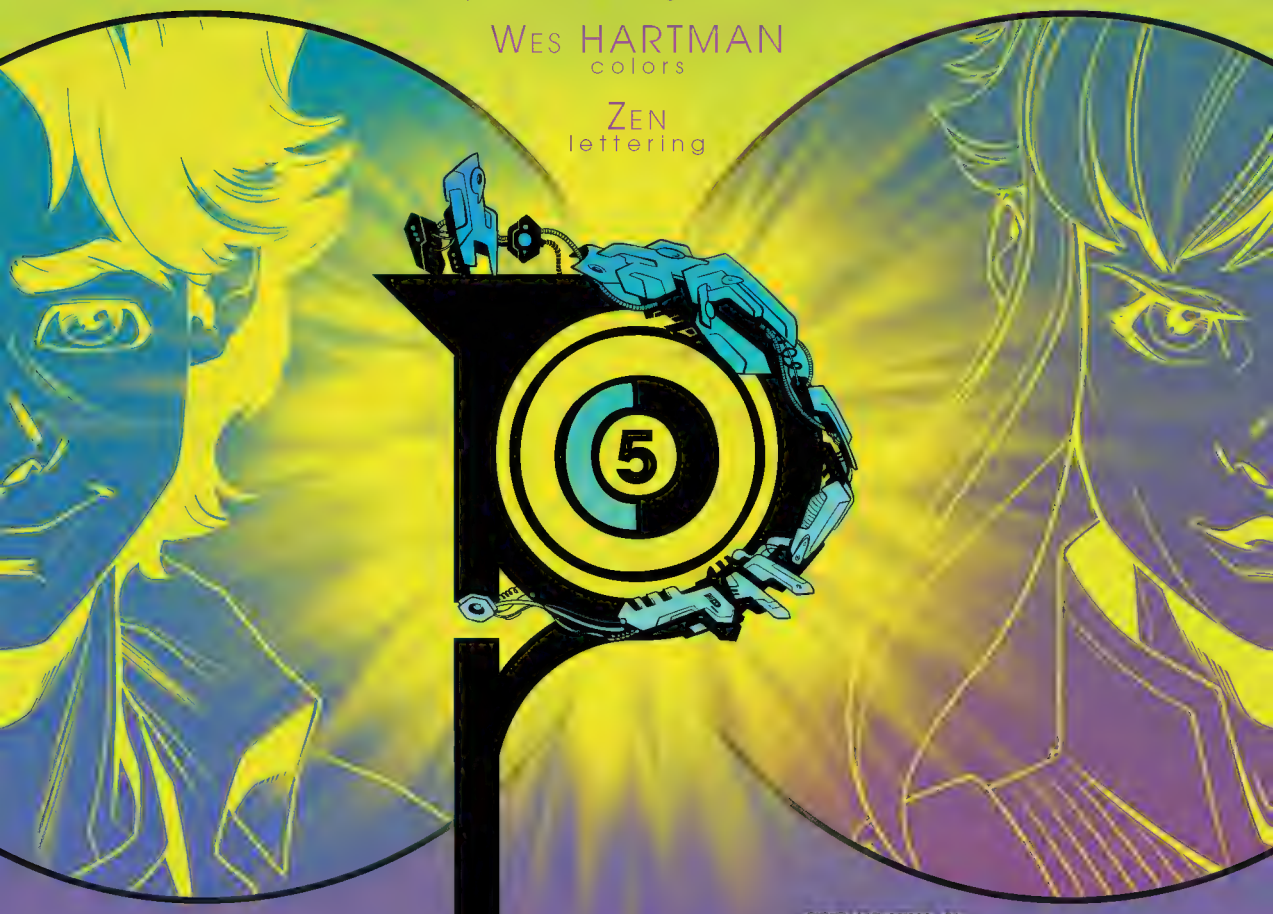
Direct Edition
by -Adam Archer
& Wes Hartman

Mark ROSLAN & Gabe CARRASCO
story

Alex ARIZMENDI
pencils & digital inks

Wes HARTMAN
colors

Zen
lettering



**Editors:**

**Design & Production:** **Logo:**

**Lettering Font Designed by:**

**PREVIOUSLY IN:**

PORTAL BOUND created by MARK ROSLAN & GABE CARRASCO

For Aspen: Founder: Michael Turner Co-Owner: Peter Steigerwald Co-Owner/President: Frank Mastromauro
Vice President/Editor in Chief: Vince Hernandez Vice President/Design and Production: Mark Rosian Editor: Gabe Carrasco
Marketing Assistant: Corinne Chuah Production Assistant: Justin Vancho Office Manager: Megan Shirk AspenStore.com: Chris Rupp

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ALRIGHT, ELI, TIME TO BE BRAVE.
SO YOU'RE IN A HUGE CASTLE ON AN ALTERNATE WORLD TRYING TO STOP A FULL OUT INVASION OF EARTH, AND THE ONLY PERSON THAT CAN HELP YOU IS A SELF-CENTERED WARRIOR PRINCESS WHO ABANDONED YOUR TEAM TO RESCUE HER MOM.
NO BIG DEAL. YOU'VE BUILT DRUIDS N' DRAGONS CAMPAIGNS TOUGHER THAN THIS.
YEAH, I DON'T BELIEVE ME EITHER.
OH NO, IT'S ALREADY BEGUN. THEY'RE COMING OUT OF THE FYMIERA-DECK, THE SCRAPCRYPT, AND HORUK'S LABORATORY! IF I HURRY, I CAN GET UPSTAIRS AND SAVE MY MOTHER--
WAIT, I MEAN, SYBIL'S MOTHER.
OUR FUSION! SYBIL'S MEMORIES! I...I KNOW THIS CASTLE. AND I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HER! I'M COMING, SYBIL.
UCK-- WHO KNOWS WHAT OTHER SIDE EFFECTS THERE ARE? I HOPE I DON'T TURN GRAY...

CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK CITY.

WITNESS, VANORA. WE'VE FINALLY DONE IT. THE CITIZENS OF HAVOS WILL BE **GODS**, MORE POWERFUL THAN THEY CAN POSSIBLY IMAGINE.

YOU HAVE TRULY ESTABLISHED OUR LEGACY, ATILUS. BUT WON'T EARTH RESIST?

"HUMANS ARE NATURALLY WEAK, AND COWARDLY.

PARIS, FRANCE.

"IF CAUGHT OFF-GUARD, YOU CAN HERD THEM LIKE LIVESTOCK INTO EVEN THE MOST UNFAMILIAR SITUATIONS.

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO.

"THOSE THAT CAN MUSTER THE WILL TO FIGHT BACK ARE NO MATCH FOR THE FYMIERA BEASTS. LIKE ANY SPECIES, THEIR STRENGTHS LIE IN NUMBERS AND TACTICS— OUR PLAN WILL STRIP THEM OF BOTH.

HAVOS

HUMAN CONTAINMENT WAREHOUSE.

"I'VE MAPPED EVERY STEP OF THIS PLAN FOR YEARS, DOWN TO THE AMOUNT OF CAGES IN THE CONTAINMENT WAREHOUSE. EVERYTHING IS **PERFECT.**"

PRINCESS SYBIL...?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! RILEY AND BRETT ARE IN TROUBLE-- NOT TO MENTION THE POPULATION OF EARTH! WE NEED TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE!
I...I CAN'T.
HMM, IF WE JUST FUSE WE CAN PROBABLY BREAK RIGHT THROUGH THESE CHAI--
IT'S OVER, ELI!
SNIFF ELI?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?! HOW DID YOU EVEN-- ?
I COULDN'T SAVE HORUK, I COULDN'T STOP OMEIL, AND I CAN'T SAVE EARTH. I TRY AND I TRY, BUT I'VE FAILED EVERY SINGLE TIME.
I'M NO WARRIOR, I'M A LOSER...AND EARTH WILL PAY FOR MY FAILURES.
HAHAHA!
ARE YOU LAUGHING?!
HAH! SORRY, JUST-- AFTER ALL THIS, YOU STILL THINK YOU'RE ALONE?
RILEY COMMITTED ACTUAL TREASON FOR YOU BEFORE YOU EVEN MET. BRETT INSISTED WE FOLLOW YOUR LEAD, DESPITE THE CONSEQUENCES! AND ME?
I JUST DUNGEON-CRAWLED THROUGH A DEADLY CASTLE TO FIND YOU! SYBIL, YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN ALONE.
NOW COME ON.
LET'S GO SAVE OUR FRIENDS.
FSSSSS

"YOU DONE MESSED UP BAD THIS TIME, OATMEAL!"
MY NAME IS OMEIL. AND GET OUT OF MY HEAD, BOY!
"FOOL, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO FUSED WITH ME AND TRAPPED ME IN HERE! CUT THE TOUGH-GUY ACT, I KNOW YOU DIDN'T WANT ANY OF THIS-- I CAN FEEL YOUR GUILT.
THIS IS YOUR REALITY NOW, BRETT. WE ARE ONE, NOW AND FOREVER, SO BE QUIET AND--
"--OH, I 'AINT GOING ANYWHERE! THIS IS YOUR REALITY NOW, SO EITHER HELP ME SAVE MY FRIENDS, OR GET READY FOR AN ETERNITY OF BRETTITUDE, OATMEAL!"
MY NAME IS NOT OATMEAL!!
CONTROL YOURSELF, BOUNTY HUNTER. IF YOU RUIN THIS MOMENT I WILL RIP YOU IN HALF AFTER I'VE REMOVED THE HUMAN FROM YOUR FORM.
YES, MY EMPEROR.
"OOOOH, IS THAT FEAR I JUST FELT? READ MY THOUGHTS! SYBELIUS IS GONNA SMASH THROUGH THAT PORTAL ANY MINUTE NOW, AND WHEN SHE DOES...
"...YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO DECIDE WHICH SIDE IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR."

THIS IS A TERRIBLE PLAN, ELI! THIS THING IS FIVE SECONDS AWAY FROM TURNING TO GOO!
"JUST HANG ON!"
HOW ARE YOU SO SURE THEY'RE EVEN THROUGH THERE?
"SERIOUSLY? IT'S A GIANT FLOATING CROWN! NOTHING SCREAMS 'MEGALOMANIAC' LIKE A KING RIDING A GIANT FREAKING CROWN INTO THE WORLD HE'S INVADING."
YEAH, THAT DOES SOUND LIKE MY DAD...
"BRACE YOURSELF! WE'RE COMING IN HOT!"
FATHER, STOP THIS IMMEDIATELY!

"HOLY CRAP, THAT'S ATILUS? WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT THAT GUY?"
MY BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS. YOU'RE HERE! COME AND WITNESS THE GIFT I HAVE BESTOWED UPON THE PEOPLE OF HAVOS.
NO! THE PEOPLE OF EARTH ARE UNDER MY PROTECTION!
SYBIL, WHAT NONSENSE HAS HORUK PUT IN YOUR HEAD? I AM EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE. EVOLVING US!
AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE! THEY ARE NOT ARMOR FOR US TO WEAR. LEAVE THIS PLANET, FATHER! I WILL NOT WARN YOU AGAIN.
THIS IS EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTING.
VERY WELL. IF THIS IS TRULY THE PATH YOU WISH TO TAKE, I WILL SHOW YOU...
...WHAT TRUE POWER IS!
NNNGGH!
"WHOA! HE'S FAST FOR A BIG GUY!!"

"TICK-TOCK, OATMEAL! WHAT'S IT GONNA BE?"
STOP THIS, ATILUS! YOU'LL HARM HER!
"ARE WE JUST GOING TO DODGE AND BLOCK? WE HAVEN'T HIT HIM ONCE!"
GRAAAHH!
UGRHH-- I NEED AN OPENING!
KRAASH
"THERE!"
ON IT!
SORRY ABOUT THIS, DAD!
DON'T BE
FFWSSSHHH
NO!

IT DID NOT HAVE TO COME TO THIS, SYBIL.
YOU COULD HAVE RULED ALONGSIDE ME. INSTEAD, YOU'VE BETRAYED YOUR FAMILY, YOUR WORLD, AND THROWN EVERYTHING AWAY. I HAVE NO USE FOR TRAITORS...
≥COUGH≤ FATHER...
...JUST ASK HORUK.
NOOO!
"OMEIL, NOW!"
GET BRECKED!
SYBIL!

SYBIL! REACH!!
HE'S TOO STRONG...
--WE CAN STILL SAVE EVERYONE!
JUST TAKE MY HAND, AND TRUST ME--!
...I DO.
FWOOOOSH!!!!!

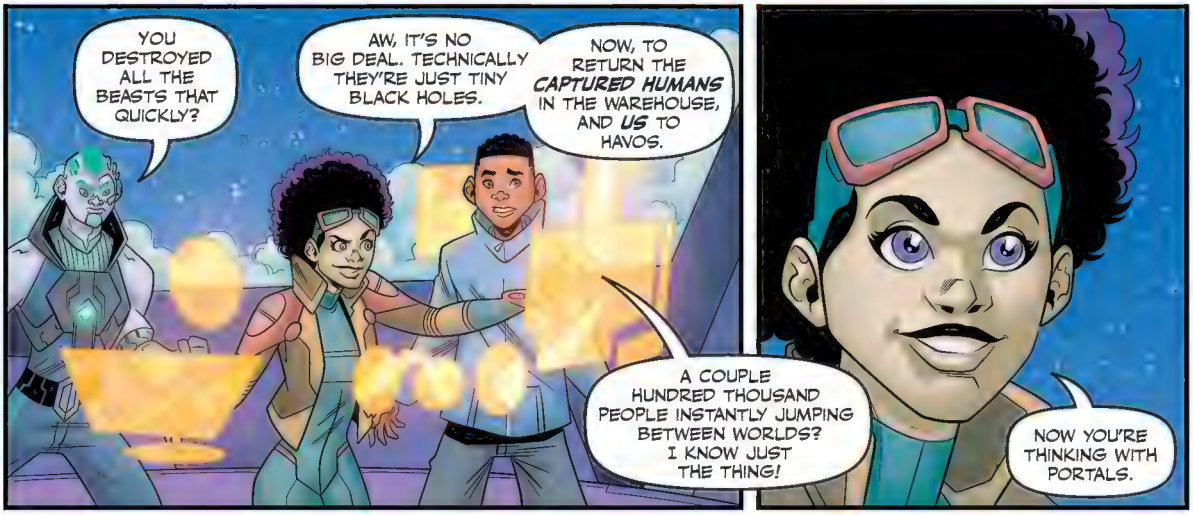
HA! SO THE BOY FROM EARTH IS NOW STRONGER-WILLED THAN THE WAR-BORN PRINCESS OF HAVOS? PATHETIC.
"HE'S ABOUT TO STRIKE! PARRY LEFT!"
SHUT UP AND FIGHT ME.
"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!"
WOOMP
A DELICATE TECHNIQUE I LEARNED FROM STREET BRAWLER V...
FWAK FWAK FWAK
...THE FIGHTING STYLE KNOWN AS...
...BUTTON MASHING!
WHOOMF
COUGH IMPOSSIBLE...!

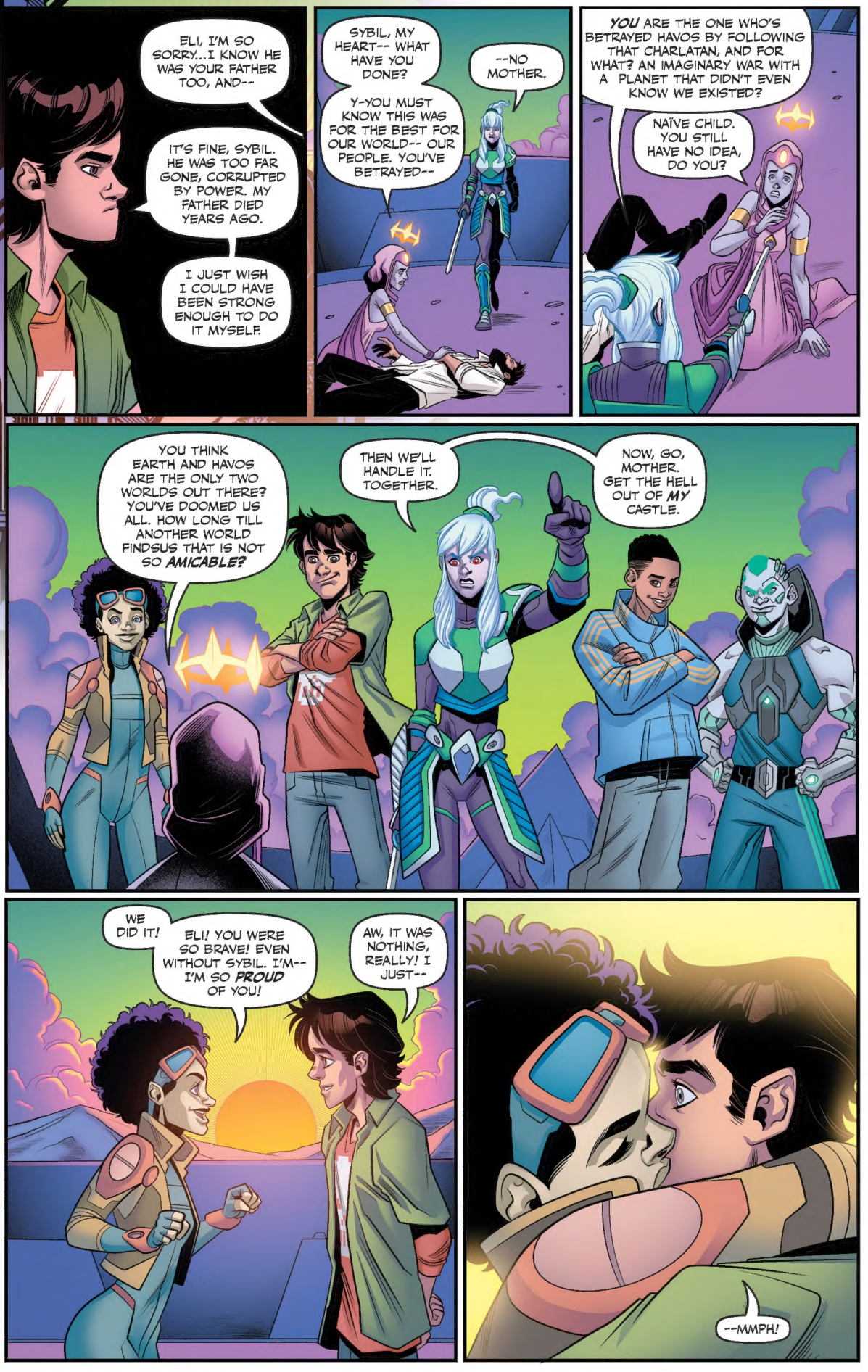
ARGGGHHH!!
DAD...?
"FATHER!"
MY LOVE!
OH, SNAP! YOU TORE HIM APART!
OH DANIEL, ARE YOU HURT?
I AM FINE, VANORA. I DIDN'T CALCULATE MY OWN SON WOULD TRY AND RUIN EVERYTHING.
DON'T YOU SEE, ELIAS? EVERYTHING I'VE WORKED FOR HAS LED ME TO THIS. TO IMMEASURABLE POWER.
WAIT...YOU WERE IN CONTROL THIS ENTIRE TIME?! THIS WHOLE TIME YOU LET MOM AND I THINK THE WORST, AND YOU'VE JUST BEEN HERE DOING THIS?
WHY DID YOU ABANDON US?
THIS IS THE CLEAREST CHOICE HUMANITY CAN MAKE, AND SOMEONE HAS TO LEAD. YOU SHOULD FEEL PROUD IT IS YOUR FATHER.
SYBIL...IT WASN'T ME...PLEASE, YOU MUST BELIEVE ME.

I AM HAVOS' PROTECTOR! READY TO USHER IN A NEW AGE OF EXISTENCE...
MY BRAVE PRINCESS... STOP HIM AT ALL COSTS... PLEASE...
"STOP HIM, ELI! BEFORE--"
I-- WE-- CAN'T... DO THIS.
...WHERE I AM A RULER AMONG GODS!
--THEN I WILL!
GRAAAGGH!!

WHAA? BRETT?
WELCOME BACK, RILEY! WE NEED SOME TECH SUPPORT AND QUICK!
OH NO... IS THAT LIVE?
THIS IS TERRIBLE! WHAT DID THEY MAKE ME DO?

"THEY'RE ACROSS THE ENTIRE PLANET! I CAN'T GET THEM ALL!"
"UNLESS..."
RRAAHH
RRAAHH
"IF I ASSIGN BOTH AN ENTRANCE AND EXIT PORTAL TO THE PRECISE COORDINATES OF EACH FYMIERA, FOR JUST A SPLIT SECOND..."
"THEY SHOULD COLLAPSE IN ON THEMSELVES! JUST NEEDED TO DO A LITTLE REALITY-BENDING."
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
RRAAHH


YOU DESTROYED ALL THE BEASTS THAT QUICKLY?
AW, IT'S NO BIG DEAL. TECHNICALLY THEY'RE JUST TINY BLACK HOLES.
NOW, TO RETURN THE *CAPTURED HUMANS* IN THE WAREHOUSE, AND *US* TO HAVOS.
A COUPLE HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE INSTANTLY JUMPING BETWEEN WORLDS? I KNOW JUST THE THING!
NOW YOU'RE THINKING WITH PORTALS.


ELI, I'M SO SORRY...I KNOW HE WAS YOUR FATHER TOO, AND--
IT'S FINE, SYBIL. HE WAS TOO FAR GONE, CORRUPTED BY POWER. MY FATHER DIED YEARS AGO.
I JUST WISH I COULD HAVE BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO DO IT MYSELF.
SYBIL, MY HEART-- WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
Y-YOU MUST KNOW THIS WAS FOR THE BEST FOR OUR WORLD-- OUR PEOPLE. YOU'VE BETRAYED--
--NO MOTHER.
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO'S BETRAYED HAVOS BY FOLLOWING THAT CHARLATAN, AND FOR WHAT? AN IMAGINARY WAR WITH A PLANET THAT DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WE EXISTED?
NAÏVE CHILD. YOU STILL HAVE NO IDEA, DO YOU?
YOU THINK EARTH AND HAVOS ARE THE ONLY TWO WORLDS OUT THERE? YOU'VE DOOMED US ALL. HOW LONG TILL ANOTHER WORLD FINDSUS THAT IS NOT SO AMICABLE?
THEN WE'LL HANDLE IT. TOGETHER.
NOW, GO, MOTHER. GET THE HELL OUT OF MY CASTLE.
WE DID IT!
ELI! YOU WERE SO BRAVE! EVEN WITHOUT SYBIL. I'M-- I'M SO PROUD OF YOU!
AW, IT WAS NOTHING, REALLY! I JUST--
--MMPH!

YEEEAH! THAT'S MY BOY!
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU OFF TO SO QUICK?
THE EMPEROR'S DEAD, THE QUEEN IS EXILED, AND THERE ARE ENTIRE OTHER WORLDS OUT THERE. IT'S A LOT TO TAKE IN.
I'M GETTING AS FAR AWAY FROM HAVOS AS I CAN. MAYBE I'LL VISIT MY COUSIN IN THE JAKOS TRIBE.
YOU DID GOOD, OATMEAL. I KNEW YOU HAD IT IN YOU!
MY NAME IS--! ⟨SIGH⟩ NEVER MIND.
ELI, I WANTED TO THANK YOU. AND... APOLOGIZE FOR THE WAY I TREATED ALL OF YOU.
I WAS JUST SO WORRIED ABOUT MY MOTHER, AND THEN HORUK...I THOUGHT I COULD DO THIS ON MY OWN.
DON'T BE SORRY, I GET IT. I NEEDED THE KICK IN THE BUTT TO BE BRAVE. IN THE END, YOU SAVED BOTH OUR WORLDS.
I DIDN'T SAVE ANYONE.
WE ALL DID.
AW, GROUP HUG!!
GET IN HERE, OMEIL!
AW YEAAH!
WHERE IS THE EXIT OF THIS STRUCTURE?

EARTH
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
TWO WEEKS LATER.
THIS LEGIT NEWS SITE THINKS THE CONCERT WAS AN ALIEN ENCOUNTER.
THERE'S A HASHTAG ON CHIRPER THAT SAYS #HELLSGATEISOPEN.
I CAN'T SLEEP, DUDE. WE SAVED THE WORLD! AND IF WE SAY ANYTHING, I'M POSITIVE GOVERNMENT FOOLS ARE GONNA MIND-WIPE US FOR SURE.
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD AND SCHOOL SEEMS SO LAME NOW. I KINDA GET WHERE SYBIL WAS COMING FROM WITH ALL HER SASS.
HEH. YEAH.
I JUST-- I REALLY THOUGHT, RILEY WOULD HAVE CONSIDERED COMING BACK TO EARTH WITH US.
OOOH, I KNEW YOU DUG HER!
IT JUST WASN'T MEANT TO BE.
WELL, WHAT EPIC QUEST AWAITS US NOW?
SCIENCE CLUB?
IF YOU'RE INTERESTED.
Join the Science

*Thank you for reading! Hope you enjoyed the adventure! —Mark & Gabe*